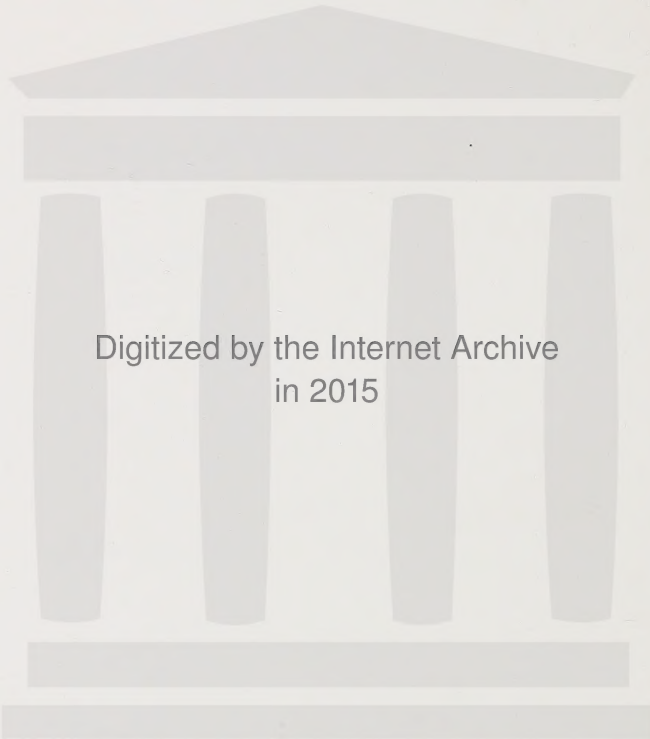


REVIEW
OF
SECONDARY
PROGRAMS

Report of the
Minister's Advisory Committee:
Foundation for the Future

Alberta



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| REVIEW |
| OF |
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PREFACE

In the spring of 1984, the Minister of Education, the Honourable David King, commissioned a review of secondary education in Alberta. The goal of the review was to assess the secondary school program available to Alberta students and to provide direction for future changes. A Ministerial Advisory Committee was appointed to assist the Minister by reviewing submissions and formulating a framework for change. Through the review process, the committee has gathered information and provided recommendations for action to improve the content and delivery of secondary education in Alberta.

The Minister's Advisory Committee was aided by a Project Team from Alberta Education, responsible for collecting data and identifying issues relevant to the review. The assistance of the Project Team has been valuable in formulating recommendations for future Alberta secondary school programs.

The review process provided for comments and recommendations from a broad cross-section of Albertans including educators, parents, students, and other interest groups. The public welcomed the opportunity to participate in the review, as evidenced by the numerous letters and briefs submitted to the review committees.

One hundred and ten written briefs were received from groups both within and outside the educational community. A survey of public opinion was taken by means of a questionnaire delivered to each Alberta household. As well, results of a student questionnaire and a Gallup poll were used to assess the public perceptions about the needs of Alberta secondary schools. Information was also received from commissioned academic reviews on ways in which students learn best, the nature of the adolescent, anticipated needs for the future, and secondary education in other provinces and countries. Further representation was received through meetings with the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents, university personnel, and the Committee on Tolerance and Understanding. In addition, members of the Minister's Advisory Committee and the Project Team attended a series of public forums sponsored by the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations.

The numerous written submissions and oral reports recognized the positive features of current secondary schooling in Alberta, but cautioned against complacency. All submissions acknowledged the important effects of high quality teaching and expressed a strong

desire for a system of education which sets high standards of performance and clear expectations for all students. The Minister's Advisory Committee supports the continuing quest for improvement and excellence in Alberta schools.

The purpose of this report is to respond to the major issues identified during the review process and to present recommendations for future secondary education in Alberta. Following assessment of public response to the report, the Advisory Committee will report to the Minister with its final recommendations.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Advisory Committee formulated the following guiding principles as a basis for responding to representations and developing recommendations:

- The responsibility of the education system is to provide sound educational programs and effective learning environments to benefit all students in accordance with ability and need.
- The responsibility of the school is to provide opportunities for learning and development relevant to the goals of schooling.
- The responsibilities, needs and expectations of parents, teachers and the community at large must be considered, but priority must be given to the present and anticipated educational needs and responsibilities of learners.
- Every effort must be made to provide good management of the finite amounts of time, material and human resources, to ensure the best possible schooling for all.
- Good communication of expectations and coordination of efforts among the family, the community and the school is necessary to create an effective educational environment.
- The roles and responsibilities of each participant in the education system must be clearly defined, accepted and acted upon as functioning parts of an integrated system.
- The assessment and improvement of educational programs must be continual, open to all participants and based upon research on learning, knowledge of student development, awareness of societal needs and anticipated requirements for future living.
- Current conditions and anticipated needs for secondary schooling must be considered in the light of our Canadian heritage, democratic society and the interdependent nature of our world.

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THE KEY QUESTIONS

The review of secondary education focused on four key questions which provided the basis for submissions to the review. The scope of the submissions to the review has been quite comprehensive, with some recommendations applying to more than one of the key questions.

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION?
2. WHAT ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ARE REQUIRED OF SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENTS?
3. IN WHAT WAYS CAN STUDENTS LEARN BEST?
4. WHAT ARE THE ROLES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL THE PARTICIPANTS IN SCHOOLING?

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THE PURPOSE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Goals of Basic Education for Alberta, as outlined in the *Junior/Senior High School Handbook* (Appendix I), have been examined as part of the review of secondary education.

The Goals of Basic Education for Alberta contains two sections, the goals of schooling and the goals of education. While the goals of schooling outline the responsibilities of school staffs in promoting learning, the goals of education are a shared responsibility.

It is important that every school provide an educational program which emphasizes the goals of schooling, such as the development of intellectual curiosity; ability to get along with others; community responsibility; an appreciation of the role of the family in society; a sense of purpose; and values of fairness and responsibility. In addition to the academic pursuits of the secondary program, students should be exposed to work experiences, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and intercultural events. This wide range of learning experiences should be presented to all junior high students, with continuing opportunities available to senior high students.

The purpose of secondary education is twofold: to provide a broadly-based education aimed at stimulating and nurturing the abilities of students; and to provide the initial stages of career preparation by developing basic work skills, with an emphasis on fostering appropriate attitudes and awareness of the requirements of the world of work.

The primary expectation of graduates is that they possess a range of skills and abilities which will allow them choices and opportunities as competent members of society. However, the rate of change in society is such that it is not possible to forecast accurately the training needs of all students. It is likely that people will change occupations several times throughout their working lives. Therefore, secondary education must provide a solid foundation of competence in a range of basic skills, and develop students' abilities to adapt and respond to new developments.

Schools must endeavour to challenge and develop each individual's potential and to enhance the ability of students to deal effectively with changing social, political, technological and economic environments. School programs must therefore develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for students to become independent, critical thinking adults. Schools must also provide an

opportunity for all students to obtain a general education, and to develop their individual interests, abilities and aptitudes.

In this paper, reference is made to a core program. The Advisory Committee takes the view that there are certain areas of study that all students should take in the interest of having a basic secondary education. In return, students must be committed to learning and achieving excellence to the best of their ability. The education that students receive in the secondary school system will undoubtedly influence their success in later life. Students must also be able to demonstrate their learning and apply their knowledge in the present.

The importance of sound programs of study has never been more evident than it is today. School programs must be vital, current and consistent with public expectations. If the goals of schooling are to be accomplished, school programs must be prepared in consultation with the other participants in education.

Examination of the goals of schooling and goals of education indicate that they are relevant to current and future expectations for the secondary school program. While the goals of schooling still stand as cornerstones for schools in Alberta, they should be more actively promoted and implemented.

Critical Thinking

Many of the submissions received indicated that secondary students need training in analytical thinking skills and decision-making abilities. As critical thinkers, students will be better prepared to act confidently in shaping their futures.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the goals of schooling be amended to include the acquisition of critical thinking skills and decision-making abilities, accompanied by a recognition of responsibility for results of decision-making.

Competence

Well educated students are able to demonstrate and apply general competencies and specialized abilities. In addition, they radiate confidence and a positive view of themselves and society. Their ability to acquire, organize, and communicate knowledge in an effective and responsible manner provides them with a sound foundation for the future. The benefits of such abilities and competence will be evident in their future career and personal endeavours.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Criteria be established to determine the attainment of skills and knowledge at each level of the core curriculum.

-
- A standard of excellence be set for all students, with the expectation that competence be demonstrated on an ongoing basis.

Conduct and Citizenship

To achieve its goals, the school must set standards for appropriate behavior. Many schools in the province are making conscious efforts to foster acceptable standards of interpersonal conduct and it is imperative that all participants support the school in achieving these standards.

Similarly, the value of Canadian citizenship should be promoted. Singing of the national anthem and participation in patriotic activities and programs is desirable. The spiritual and moral character of society could be enhanced through school activities such as recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Schools can best achieve these goals if the home and community are involved and support this effort.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Schools develop and implement policies which reflect the value of high standards of interpersonal conduct.
- Schools develop policies that foster the development of moral and ethical standards which include honesty, respect for others, respect for self, tolerance and understanding, acceptance of the rule of law, integrity, courtesy, and responsibility for one's actions.
- Policy be developed to instil in Alberta youth an appreciation of the value of citizenship and moral behavior.

Secondary Schools and Society

An overall goal for participants in secondary education should be to ensure that school programs are understood and open to public view.

Secondary education must prepare students for involvement in the world of work through skill and attitude development. Business, industry and labour should assume greater responsibility for developing a working partnership with schools by designing high-quality work experience programs characterized by clear expectations and good communication between the employer, the school and the student. Employers must be encouraged to participate with educators in communicating their expectations of both the program and the students, in terms of required attitudes, behaviors and skills.

Efforts must be made to broaden the instructional component of the work experience program so that students have a balance between practical and theoretical learning about the world of work. The instructional component should be provided by the school utilizing

resources available from business, labour and government. Students need to know about work safety, labour standards, skill requirements, and how to function appropriately as employees.

Although actual job training is primarily the responsibility of employers and post-secondary institutions, secondary schools must provide elements of basic work skills and attitudes which will support students as beginning employees. Vocational education, academic occupational, and special education programs should have components of career preparation and vocational experiences, while the academic program should involve elements of career awareness and exploration.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Students be made aware of the expectations of the world of work in terms of performance, attitudes, and behaviors.
- Work experience programs be provided which include knowledge of employment opportunities; practical knowledge of the working of the market economy and its dependence on productivity; awareness of the expectations of employers; and the development of career knowledge in addition to the emphasis on actual job experience.
- Work experience programs be promoted and enhanced to broaden the range of available work experience opportunities.

Awareness and Review

So that education may keep pace with social change, it is desirable that a means of reviewing educational performance be instituted. Alberta Education must provide leadership in coordinating a planning process which supports educational improvement through innovation and experimentation at the local level.

Ongoing review and evaluation of programs and curricula is valuable in guiding the education system to meet individual and societal needs.

An accessible forum should be established to aid in the review and evolution of policy for secondary education.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education, in conjunction with the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Trustees' Association, develop a program which will include the following: information for the public about the accomplishments of education; encouragement of public involvement in education; a handbook for the general public that will provide information to industry, business, labour, post-secondary institutions and parents.
- The Minister establish a committee of education, industry and labour representatives to advise as to current and future expectations of graduates.

Summary

Students must be provided with opportunities to develop a base of knowledge and abilities from which specialized talents and skills will emerge in the later stages of the secondary education program. Students must accept the duality of being generalists and specialists. Performance and thoroughness must be emphasized throughout the whole program.

The end goal of secondary education remains the development of competent individuals who are able to function independently and cooperatively with others in order to contribute positively to society.

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ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The objective of secondary education is to provide a composite program for the development of attitudes, knowledge and skills, which permits choice and opportunities for growth and success. Knowledge includes both the substance of acquired learning and the application of learning that is demonstrated by students. Attitudes and social skills are learned through the interaction of ideas and people, and are influenced by the quality of the school environment and the teacher-student relationship. These tangible results of education are accumulated through active participation in school programs.

Attitudes

The current secondary program is organized around the development of attitudes, skills and knowledge. Desirable attitudes are stated for each subject and level of study.

Secondary education would benefit by having a set of "desirable personal characteristics" known and supported by all participants, similar to that currently in place for elementary schools. These characteristics should reinforce the standards set in elementary years yet recognize the need for secondary students to assume progressively greater responsibility and latitude in making decisions about their education and their lifestyle.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- A set of "desirable personal characteristics," appropriate to their level of maturity, be established for students in junior and senior high schools.
- School boards and schools, in consultation with their communities, develop and consistently apply policies which will serve to foster desirable personal characteristics.

Basic Objectives

Common content and objectives for secondary education are necessary. Students must acquire knowledge and meet established standards of competence in communication, mathematics, social studies and science. In addition, students must have experiences in the

world of work and with new technologies. Students must also have opportunities for second language instruction and fine arts training, as well as learning about the avenues for their participation in all aspects of society. All of these are elements which demand basic competence and demonstration of ability.

Based on such provincial objectives, a sound provincial core program should be developed and maintained, with basic competence as a principle in the development of criteria. Such provincial criteria should be considered to be the minimum education standard for all students.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Common objectives and content be established for the core secondary education program.
- Basic competencies be supported as the minimum standard expected of all students relevant to each program level.

Evaluation

Methods of evaluating student achievement of the basic provincial criteria should be developed. Student evaluation is best determined by combining several measures to provide a composite assessment which would measure strengths and weaknesses in a student's learning relative to the provincial criteria for each subject.

Departmental examinations received public support as a means of assuring equity for all students by providing a provincial standard of measurement. However, it is recognized that school based assessment is most relevant for assessing attainment of many objectives of the programs of studies.

Recommendation

- It is recommended that provincial diploma examinations be maintained at the Grade 12 level and constitute a portion of each student's final marks.

Subject Recommendations

Submissions from the public included comments on the current subject area offerings in the secondary school program. There is concern that elementary and secondary schools are asked to cover too broad a program at the expense of thoroughness. Sufficient time must be provided to deal with core subjects.

A number of suggestions were offered to enhance subject area programs.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The ability to communicate effectively is the most important and

basic of skills; therefore, schools should foster development of good communication abilities.

It is of vital importance that students who enter the secondary school program have acquired basic competencies in receptive and expressive communication skills. Continuing development of these skills must then be emphasized throughout secondary school programs.

Ongoing evaluation and diagnosis of communication skills and of learning difficulties is required. Resources must be available to assist students in need of special attention.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The language arts curriculum continue to emphasize the integrated development of the communication skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
- Language arts skills be taught across the curriculum.
- The need for early identification of learning difficulties and student weaknesses at the elementary school level be emphasized and corrective measures taken.
- Additional resources and attention be applied to the development of communication competencies in the elementary and secondary schools of the province.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies provides an opportunity for students to develop personal and social attitudes and skills and to acquire understanding about the world community. Public response indicates support for the social studies curriculum, but emphasizes a need to develop greater knowledge of Canadian history, geography and economic development. Albertans expect that secondary education will prepare students to function in our demanding and competitive economic environment, and will provide an awareness of factors influencing national productivity.

Albertans have indicated that schools should promote an awareness of the economic needs of the province as a body of interacting producers, consumers, entrepreneurs and workers. Major Alberta industries such as agriculture, energy, manufacturing, forestry, tourism and the service industries should be the focus of this economic awareness.

Social studies at the junior high school level should deal with issues from a provincial and national orientation based on Canadian history, while senior high school social studies should deal with Canadian history from a national and international historical perspective. Business, industry, labour, and government agencies should assume a greater role in providing current information on provincial and national development.

The recommendations for the social studies program are intended to provide a focus on students' ability to function in society as active and knowledgeable individuals.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Local and provincial geography and history be emphasized at the elementary level.
- Provincial and national geography, history and economics be emphasized at the junior high level.
- National and international geography, history and economics be emphasized at the senior high level.
- Interculturalism be studied as an integral part of the social studies curriculum.
- Citizenship be studied so that students develop an awareness of government structures and the processes of a democratic society in determining social and economic policy.
- Two streams of the social studies program be offered at the senior high level.
- Social studies be mandatory to the end of Grade 12.

MATHEMATICS

The junior high school mathematics program should focus on practical application of mathematical concepts with attention given to more abstract concepts at the senior high school level. Every student should receive mathematics instruction to at least the end of Grade 11. Efforts must be made to articulate the mathematics program with the expectations of post-secondary institutions and job and societal requirements.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Mathematics instruction in junior high school, and general and technical mathematics at the senior high school level, focus on practical application of mathematical concepts.
- Mathematics be mandatory to the end of Grade 11.

SCIENCE

The public supports the study of science as an important discipline and recognizes the impact and influence of science on our daily lives through its application in industry, agriculture, forestry, and other areas vital to Alberta's social and economic welfare.

The role of science in society needs to be emphasized, with consideration given to the application of science, the social and environmental impact of scientific discoveries, and the moral and ethical issues which accompany the use of scientific knowledge.

An applied science program has merit for students entering the job market and technical and junior colleges.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Experiential learning, the application of scientific principles and cross-disciplinary study, be the main orientation of junior high school science courses.
- A three-year applied science program be developed at the senior high school level for students with a general interest or ability in science.

FINE ARTS

There is considerable support for the provision of experiences in art, music and drama, to provide a broad education and foster creative leisure time involvement. It is essential that opportunities for growth in artistic endeavours be offered to all junior high school students, and that a specialized program route be offered at the senior high school level.

Recommendation

It is recommended that fine arts be a component of the junior high school core program.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education programs should promote physical, intellectual and social development. The acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes in physical education has significant impact on the functioning of students by promoting health, fitness, and self-awareness through the challenge of physical education activities.

A daily fitness program contributes to physical and mental well-being, and a broad physical education program should include opportunities for students to participate in individual, intramural, and interscholastic activities.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- A daily physical education class be part of the regular school program for all junior high students.
- Fitness activities be emphasized as a daily component of the physical education program.
- Physical Education 10 be a 5-credit course.

PRACTICAL ARTS

The practical arts consist of the home economics and the industrial arts curricula which offer broad, experientially based programs in which students can develop the knowledge, skills, and decision-making abilities needed to improve the quality of personal

relationships, home environments, and consumer activities. In addition, these programs offer an opportunity for the practical application of the academic program and help students to determine future educational direction.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the practical arts be a component of the junior high school core program.

BUSINESS EDUCATION

Business education provides opportunities for the instruction of students in office procedures and the adaptation of technology to the workplace. The program also fosters practice in business endeavours, with actual experiences in product research and development, marketing, business accounting and consumerism.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a business education program be a component of the junior high school core program.

HEALTH EDUCATION

The health education curriculum contains a wide range of topics and units of studies such as first aid, safety, drug and alcohol education, life skills and nutrition. Albertans recognize the importance of promoting health awareness and developing healthy lifestyles. The school program, which is influential in developing student attitudes, provides the opportunity to promote the maintenance of good health habits.

There is support for the health curriculum being implemented as a regularly scheduled course. Units in the health curriculum dealing with family life and sex education should be optional.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the health program be a component of the junior high school core program.

ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

Submissions to the review indicated substantial support for second language instruction. Proficiency in a second language improves the opportunities for active involvement in a wide range of cultural and commercial endeavours. The benefit of reinforcing communication competencies through the study of a second language was also recognized. Clearer criteria for assessing basic competency in second languages need to be established.

The constitutional status of the French language was recognized and there was considerable support for French as a preferred second

language. However, exploration and initiatives should continue to be taken to establish, where viable, other second language programs. These programs may have to be offered at certain educational centres in the province or through distance education facilities. Promotion of travel and exchange programs would be a means of enhancing language programs.

Attention should be given to addressing the special needs of Native students who do not use English as their first language of communication.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- French be recognized as one of the requirements for an academic high school diploma (see chart on page 19).
- A diploma examination be developed for French.
- Provisions be made for Native students to receive instruction in their native language during the first two years of their elementary schooling.

JUNIOR HIGH OPTIONS

Options are an important part of the junior high school program. It is expected that when options are included in the program they will be meaningful. Before a locally developed option is introduced, it must receive Alberta Education approval.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The Group 'B' option program be discontinued.
- Alberta Education provide for locally developed options at the junior high school level and that such options be monitored to ensure appropriate substance, relevance, and instruction.
- Alberta Education maintain a directory and/or library of acceptable locally developed options.
- Alberta Education develop curricula on a modular basis for the following subjects: fine arts, practical arts, business education, and health education.

Junior High School Program Requirements

In the junior high schools, programs must provide opportunities to develop a range of basic competencies and exploratory courses to provide for knowledgeable program selection and specialization at the senior high level. At present, considerable variation in time allotments and subject emphasis exists throughout the province. The Minister's Advisory Committee presents a blueprint for discussion which reflects an overall desire for more emphasis on a core program with more structure while retaining a degree of flexibility and local option.

EXAMPLES OF ALTERNATIVE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TIMETABLES

Junior High School - Minimum Hourly Requirements

| Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Grade 9 | |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|
| Language Arts | • | • | 150 hr/yr |
| Social Studies | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Mathematics | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Science | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Physical Education | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| | Fine Arts | | 150 hr/3yrs |
| | Business Education | | 150 hr/3yrs |
| | Practical Arts | | 150 hr/3yrs |
| | Health and Guidance | | 150 hr/3yrs |
| | | | 150 hr/3yrs |

Junior High School - Full Utilization of Provincial Programs

| Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Grade 9 | |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|
| Language Arts | • | • | 150 hr/yr |
| Social Studies | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Mathematics | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Science | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Physical Education | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| • | Fine Arts | • | 75 hr/yr |
| • | Business Education | • | 75 hr/yr |
| • | Practical Arts | • | 75 hr/yr |
| • | Health and Guidance | • | 75 hr/yr |
| | | | 150 hr/3yrs |

Junior High School Program - Includes Second Language

| Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Grade 9 | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Language Arts | • | • | 150 hr/yr |
| Social Studies | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Mathematics | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Science | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Physical Education | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Second Language | • | • | 125 hr/yr |
| Fine Arts | • | Practical Arts | 75 hr/yr |
| Practical Arts | Health and Guidance | | 75 hr/yr |
| | Business Education | | 75 hr/yr |

■ Indicates time available for local programming

It is proposed that the minimum hourly requirements be increased for mathematics, science, social studies, and physical education.

It is recommended that modular programs be developed by Alberta Education in fine arts, practical arts (industrial education and home economics), business education, and health education. These modules would cover topic areas of importance to students in junior high school. Schools could utilize the minimum hours of instruction required for these programs to offer specific modules most suitable for their students. For example, students could pursue either drama, art or music as a fine arts area. If so desired, a school could expand its offerings by using the flextime available to offer all the modules in that program.

It is also suggested that consideration be given to making available to students the opportunity to take a second language.

Time beyond minimum requirements may be used for remediation, enrichment, added emphasis on core subjects, or locally developed programs. It is proposed that local options, designed to meet local needs and opportunities, should be subject to approval on the basis of their relevance and substance.

Senior High School Program Requirements

The secondary school program should be designed to provide a broad base of learning in the first three years, with a specialized program of studies in the last three years of secondary schooling. While junior high should involve general exploratory learning, senior high should provide a degree of specialization centred around core subjects.

A feature of this approach is the opportunity for each student to make a commitment to a program route at the end of Grade 9. Each program route would consist of core subjects and specialized courses. Programs may vary in the number of courses and in the credit requirements for completion. To increase communication between home and school, and to ensure support of and commitment to the selection of program, parents should formally acknowledge that they are aware of the selection of a specialized program. Provision must be made for students who wish to transfer to other routes, although this may demand additional time in high school. Provision would also exist for students to take additional courses if they so desired. A General High School Diploma, which provides recognition of training and attests to the competencies of the student, would continue to be awarded upon successful completion of minimum requirements. Students completing specialized programs should receive a diploma describing such attainment.

At present, there are numerous senior high school options from which to choose; in fact their proliferation suggests that their content and relevance need to be examined.

EXAMPLES OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

General Diploma

| Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 |
|--|----------------|----------|
| English 10 13 | 20 23 | 30 33 |
| Social Studies 10 13 | 20 23 | 30 33 |
| Mathematics 10 13 15 | 20 23 25 | |
| Science: Physics 10 Chemistry 10 (one of) Biology 10 Science 10 | | |
| Physical Education 10 | | |
| | | |
| | | |

General Diploma - Minimum 100 credits

Grade 12 English

Grade 12 Social Studies

Grade 11 Mathematics

Grade 10 Science

Grade 10 Physical Education

Academic Diploma

| Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 |
|--|----------|----------|
| English 10 | 20 | 30 |
| Social Studies 10 | 20 | 30 |
| Mathematics 10 | 20 | 30 |
| Two of French, Mathematics 31 10 and Academic Sciences 10 | 20 20 | 30 30 |
| Physical Education 10 | | |
| | | |
| | | |

General Diploma Requirements **plus**

English 30

Two of: Physics 30

French 30

Social Studies 30

Chemistry 30

Mathematics 31

Mathematics 30

Biology 30

Vocational, Business Education, Fine Arts Diplomas

| Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 |
|--|---------------------|----------|
| English 10 13 | 20 23 | 30 33 |
| Social Studies 10 13 | 20 23 | 30 33 |
| Mathematics 10 13 15 | 20 23 25 | |
| Science: Physics 10 Chemistry 10 (one of) Biology 10 Science 10 | | |
| Physical Education 10 | | |
| | Designated Programs | |
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Example: Vocational Education Diploma - Building Construction

General Diploma Requirements **plus**

Mathematics 13

Building Construction 12 plus 30 credits at
the Grade 11 and 12 level

Drafting 12

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education design requirements and provide diploma recognition for completion of the following programs: general, academic, vocational education, business education, fine arts, special education and academic occupational programs.
- All senior high school options be reviewed to ensure relevance and eliminate duplication.

CORE PROGRAM

The core program at the junior high school level includes three-year programs in language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, and physical education, and a required minimum of time over the three years for health and guidance, business education, practical arts, and fine arts.

At the high school level, English, social studies, mathematics, science, and physical education are required. It is anticipated that specialized programs will go beyond minimum requirements in certain of these subjects, as well as requiring subjects for the area of specialization.

It is recognized that the nature and extent of a required core of subjects will have further debate and modification.

The Advisory Committee maintains that a sound core program is needed within the secondary school program.

Summary

The wide-ranging scope of the secondary education program provides for learning opportunities for all students. Students are expected to develop basic skills which allow them to communicate, compute and decide on future courses of action. Demonstration of learning, both through the application of concepts and assumption of a mature and active role in the community, is valued by parents and the public. Overall, the hope is that, through education, students will develop their basic skills and unique abilities so that they will become competent, assured individuals, and contributing members of society.

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WAYS STUDENTS LEARN BEST

Students have varying levels of maturity, ability, intelligence and motivation. The mandate of every school system is to nurture and develop each student's potential. If the education system expects students to become adaptable, creative, resourceful and committed to learning and improvement, then the system must reflect these same qualities. The challenge to education is to meet different needs with a flexible approach to programming, so that each student becomes competent and develops positive attitudes.

Continually emerging technologies necessitate that schools be properly equipped and teachers adequately trained to assist students in coping with this constant change. It is equally important, though, that the human element of schooling not be swept aside by the tide of technological advances.

A number of factors combine to provide a caring, supportive learning environment in which all participants contribute to a quality education for each student.

Primacy of Instruction

Teachers have a significant impact on students' learning and their development of positive attitudes towards themselves and education. Teachers are the means by which the school environment is caring, supportive and challenging. The major functions of teachers are to present clear and reasonable expectations, to teach, and to promote learning.

A positive atmosphere in the school stimulates the desire to learn and enhances a student's self-image as a competent and valued individual. It is incumbent, then, on school staffs to establish a positive learning environment emphasizing teachers working with students, both on an individual and a group basis.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a program for increasing school effectiveness be implemented, in which school staffs adopt a philosophy which promotes effective leadership, commitment to excellence, wise use of students' and teachers' time, and high expectations of student behavior.

Delivery Systems

Stakeholders in education must be encouraged to assist in developing more effective learning opportunities for students. Cooperation of all participants is needed if the education system is to attain its goals. The 'community school' concept has been well received and should continue to be developed and supported.

Traditional subject arrangements based on time allotments and the Carnegie Unit and Credit System are still supported. However, there exists the potential for improvement in the delivery of secondary education if a possibility exists for variation from this approach. Local schools or school jurisdictions should have the opportunity to modify the delivery of school programs to match local needs and aspirations.

In designing localized delivery of the secondary education program, responsibility and accountability will ensure attainment of the basic competencies. Equity of educational opportunities will exist for all Alberta students through the provision of common content and objectives for basic education. Given that a school is meeting the criteria of the content and objectives established for secondary education, and has certified staff, there should be room for considerable autonomy in the delivery of the program.

It is important that adaptive and innovative programs be evaluated so that educational approaches evolve and continue to challenge and stimulate students.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- A provincial system of school accreditation be developed to assure that the secondary education content is delivered and objectives are achieved.
- School accreditation be supervised by local school boards and Alberta Education.
- Policies be developed which encourage resourcefulness and innovation in the development of educational programming and the exchange of information.

Counselling and Guidance

The school counselling and guidance program must include provision for educational, career, and personal counselling. An effective counselling and guidance program necessitates the cooperation of the guidance counsellor, the teacher, and others. It assists students in determining their aptitudes and interests, and in acquiring information for effective decision-making.

In addition to functioning as a communication bridge between the school and the home, the counselling program should offer guidance to students which promotes their communication and interpersonal skills.

The school counselling program must provide personal counselling for student problems and address factors which inhibit the learning process. Increasingly, the school is faced with the personal and social problems of the student and his or her family. Although the student and the family often look to the school for help, the counselling program should nonetheless highlight the importance of the family as a base of support for the student.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The counselling and guidance program be part of the school program and be assured for all schools.
- Community services be coordinated with the school counselling program.
- An inventory be taken of available support services in each district, and that community and provincial resource book to be compiled and provided to counsellors, parents and teachers.

Library Services

A school library or information centre complements and supports the instructional role of the teacher. It is expected that each school will have access to information services in order to provide equality of education throughout the province.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Library and information services be assured for all schools.
- The Alberta government set standards for the provision of libraries and library services.
- School libraries be staffed by trained personnel.
- In-service/pre-service programs be provided to make teachers aware of the use of the library as a co-curricular service.
- Library skills be integrated into curricular programs.

Future Orientation

The ever-changing nature of our society must be recognized, and some of the demands of the future anticipated. Representations to the review suggested that the best preparation for the future is to achieve competence in a range of abilities for the present, to develop student awareness of probable changes, and to be adaptable.

The adaptation process includes the ability to take stock of needs and resources, to generate alternative choices, and to make thoughtful decisions. In order for students to cope with future demands they need a strong base of competencies and appropriate attitudes, and an awareness and appreciation of their own abilities.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The secondary education program be adapted to incorporate practice in critical thinking and decision-making.
- School programs should include activities designed to foster thinking skills and problem attack skills.

Computer Literacy

The use of new technologies and the emergence of computers throughout our society suggest that the present and future orientation of education would be well served by developing the computer literacy of students. Alberta Education should provide leadership in developing computer technology in the classroom. The use of computers in the elementary schools and in the home will, in the long-term, result in students entering junior high school with an understanding of and skill in the use of computers. However, in those cases where students have not had this opportunity by the time they reach junior high school, a program of computer literacy should be provided as part of the business education program.

With the increasing role of technology in education, the human element of instruction must be maintained in partnership with the use of technology as an instructional tool.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Computer literacy be developed and integrated throughout school programs, using computers for data storage, word processing, educational networks, distance education and computer assisted education.
- The government take necessary initiatives to promote the development of education software relevant to the secondary education curriculum.

Educational Network

A number of programs exist which may be accessed by more students through an educational computer network. Technology also exists to aid in the flow of information to schools and to provide specialized courses and information to students.

An information delivery network using computers can provide electronic mail for schools and administrative services, and information to teachers, administrators and the developers of programs. An educational computer network may also facilitate learning by connecting students in different districts and schools who are studying the same unit or subject.

Instruction through the use of video, tele-conferencing and other means of distance education should be utilized, with the school as a learning centre and teachers as guides and supervisors of learning.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education prepare proposals for the implementation of a computer education information network.
- Funding, equipment and in-service programs be provided to schools by Alberta Education in support of this network.
- The Alberta Correspondence School of Alberta Education work in conjunction with ACCESS to promote the development and distribution of alternative delivery systems.

Students with Special Needs

Alberta Education recognizes the obligation to provide a range of specialized services, staff and programs for students. However, additional instructional methods and curricula need to be developed for students who are outside the average range of abilities. Support services, special programs, and specialized teachers are needed to implement these programs.

In particular, attention should continue to be given to handicapped students. Special education services should be available for students who require such programs. Additional attention should be given to the transition of students from school settings to further training and work placements.

There is also a need to challenge gifted and talented students who will benefit from programs specifically designed for them and which would allow them to progress at their own rate of learning. Where viable, attention should be given to offering post-secondary courses to such students while they are in secondary school.

In order to provide equity of educational opportunities throughout the province, it may be necessary to provide additional emphasis to certain programs, to vary the amounts of per student grants, and to provide support services emphasizing distinctly different services for some students. These services should be provided to students who, by reason of social or economic circumstance, or because of their distance from educational centres, experience educational disadvantages. There also are cultural groups that have need of special programming so that they can move gradually and smoothly into the secondary program and the mainstream of society.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- A coordinated effort be made by Alberta Education, school boards and employers to improve opportunities for handicapped students to move to employment or further training.

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- A feasibility study be undertaken concerning the establishment of centres in the province for enrichment programs.
 - Programs of studies for gifted junior and senior high school students be developed.
 - Specialized education opportunities and adapted programs be provided to students who experience educational disadvantages due to isolated locations or social and economic circumstances.

Student Assessment

Assessment provides a means by which students demonstrate their knowledge and mastery of their studies. Albertans recognize the value of assessments of student progress as a means of determining achievement, recognizing success, and providing a diagnostic review of student and program needs. The involvement of the classroom teacher in planning and marking examinations and assessing student performance is an important practice. While there does not appear to be a demand for diploma examinations at the Grade 9 level, there is a need to put into place a policy governing the entrance requirements for senior high school.

There is also a need to develop an overall policy for determining advanced standing in the secondary program. This policy may include provision for challenge tests. School boards and staff should develop policy taking into account the expected standards of mastery and the assurance of the student meeting all of the objectives of the curriculum.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education develop entrance requirements in the core subjects of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies which school boards can use in consultation with teachers to develop criteria for entrance to senior high school.
- That an overall policy be developed for determining advanced standing in secondary education programs.

Sharing Services

To provide adequate resources and services to schools, cooperative ventures among school jurisdictions should be encouraged.

There is a need to provide educational services, such as vocational training and practical arts courses, to students from schools and districts with limited resources. Some of these needs can be met through the use of mobile instructional labs and workshops.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Alberta Education support the provision of

mobile facilities and programs through flexible staffing and programming alternatives.

Articulation of Programs

Secondary education exists in partnership with elementary education, post-secondary education, and business and industry.

Better communication and coordination of services among these elements is needed in order to articulate expectations and programs which will encourage a continuation of learning in a progressive and unified manner.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education improve articulation of the secondary education program with the elementary and post-secondary programs and the business community.
- The needs of the secondary education system be better communicated to the faculties of education with the intent of promoting optimal teacher education programs for secondary education.

Teacher Professionalism

Students and the public place a high value on good teaching. The primacy of instruction and the positive impact of teachers on the development of students is well recognized. In considering how students learn best, the quality of teachers is the most significant factor in meeting the goals of schooling.

A review of the instructional day should be undertaken, keeping in mind the principles of good time management and the multiplicity of roles of the teacher. Since teachers are valued most for their contact with students, efforts must be made to give this priority.

Action should be taken to ensure proper evaluation of school staff. Measures to maintain a competent professional staff include: training and administrative courses on leadership for principals and heads of departments; opportunities for teacher exchange and classroom visitation within schools, between schools, and between districts to promote the development of teaching expertise; provision for teachers to have access to short-term sabbaticals for professional upgrading purposes. It should be part of every teacher's responsibility to upgrade personal teaching skills — to have a plan for professional improvement and to act upon it.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education and school boards support the maintenance of

quality teaching through encouraging upgrading and professional development of the teaching staff.

- Opportunities for ongoing professional development activities be provided by schools and school boards.
- A review of the role of the teacher be made with attention to the ways in which use of clerical support staff can increase a teacher's productivity.
- A study be made of teacher time management, focussing on increasing teacher-student interaction time.

Teacher Education

With teachers as primary elements in the education system, teacher education is of major importance. Student teachers should have a realistic understanding of the nature of the profession.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The faculties of education make provisions for in-school experience for students in their first year of study, with an increase in the duration and scope of practicum experiences in subsequent years.
- A junior high school teacher preparation program be developed by the universities.
- The identification and correction of learning difficulties in students be a feature of teacher education programs.
- Alberta universities, Alberta Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Trustees' Association develop policy for a teacher internship program.

Teacher Evaluation

There is a strong desire to have Alberta students receive instruction of the highest quality. Teacher evaluation procedures are necessary to assure quality instruction and to encourage and recognize excellence in teaching. Teachers, parents, students, and those entering the profession must all understand what is expected of teachers.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Alberta Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Trustees' Association develop policies, guidelines and procedures for teacher evaluation.
- Programs be developed for the recognition of excellence in teaching.

Needs at the Junior High School Level

Enhancement of the secondary education program for junior high students is a priority for many Albertans. While grade combinations other than seven to nine may suit local circumstances, emphasis must be placed on developing a secondary program best suited to the needs of students at this level. Representations to the Secondary School Review identified several key elements in a successful junior high program which are not exclusive to this level but need particular emphasis during these years.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- A policy statement be developed for junior high which emphasizes:
 1. the need for school policies of high expectations, clear direction, and consistent application of standards of student behavior.
 2. the need for the integration of current and practical applications of concepts into the curriculum.
 3. the need to provide each student with a "homeroom" teacher advisor.
 4. the need to provide a structured school program with sufficient emphasis on core subjects.
 5. the need to provide a co-curricular and extra-curricular program which provides for planned and directed activities for all students.
 6. the need to provide parents and students with information on the nature and requirements of high school, post-secondary institutions and employment alternatives.

Spares

Students should make a commitment to participate fully in their studies and should therefore be involved in meaningful activities throughout the school day. In submissions to the review, concerns were raised regarding the problems associated with spare periods in senior high school. Parents, teachers, and students should place priority on using this free time effectively. Students should apply themselves to their school program, and programs should be designed so that spare periods are allotted only if they are to the educational advantage of the student.

School Day/Year

The current length of the school day/year seem appropriate, but efforts should be made to ensure that time is well managed.

Concerns have been raised about the usefulness of the semester

system. Representations to the review indicated a preference for year-long scheduling in sequential core subjects. Timetables should be flexible in order to meet the needs of the students and the demands of specific programs.

Recommendation

It is recommended that local school boards and staff evaluate the merits of semestered programs for their schools.

Summary

Secondary schools must make every effort to educate and train students to the extent of their ability. Secondary schools should provide a caring and supportive environment in which students come to value learning. Therefore, school programs and instructional activities must be adaptable to the ways in which individual students learn. When students graduate, they are expected to have basic knowledge, skills and learning experiences from which further growth can occur in work or post-secondary training.

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ROLES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The determination of roles, rights and responsibilities of all participants in education is necessary if the goals of schooling are to be achieved.

Many representations to the review indicated a need for coordination of services and recognized the importance of shared efforts in education. No one agency can meet all the needs of all students learning to become capable and contributing members of society.

The success of the secondary education system is dependent on acceptance of various responsibilities by the participants in education. Given that the roles, rights and responsibilities can be defined, it is essential that processes for better articulation between secondary education participants be activated. Post-secondary institutions and industry have an important role to play in guiding the design and implementation of secondary programs.

Articulation should lead to better understanding and communication of the expected performance of the participants and agencies involved in education. For instance, industry and trades should recognize the value of the training received by students with non-academic diplomas. It is also desirable that colleges and technical schools accept a vocational diploma when setting entrance requirements.

In developing a positive and responsive educational system it is important that the focus be primarily and essentially on the roles and responsibilities of the participants. It is expected that parents and the community will support the school in meeting the goals of schooling and that the school programs will complement these other agencies in meeting the goals of education. It is vital that after roles, rights and responsibilities are clarified and conveyed to participants, they be supported by all.

Students

The educational well-being of students is a major priority, the attainment of which is dependent on students involving themselves in learning activities with an attitude of self-directed participation and a striving for improvement. As evident from the student questionnaires, the students want to know the expectations of the secondary program. They also want good teachers and adequate preparation for future

jobs. As a result of the secondary education program, it is expected that students will develop attitudes of responsibility and become actively involved in making choices which positively affect their future.

The *roles* of students are to attend school regularly and punctually, and to act responsibly in all aspects of their education; to participate in the day to day activities of school life; and to make efforts to integrate their learning in a meaningful way into their daily lives.

The *rights* of students are to avail themselves of the best possible education; to participate in the choice of courses of study; to be assessed responsibly in terms of educational achievements and general behavior; and to be treated with fairness and respect.

The *responsibilities* of students are to attend school regularly and punctually; to recognize that educational instruction must be accompanied by individual effort and achievement on the part of the students; to make a commitment to the course of study and to be fully involved in learning opportunities. Students are also expected to adopt good study habits, follow school regulations and act with respect toward teachers and fellow students.

Families

Families provide the essential function of supporting and encouraging the child as a learner. As such, there is a recognized need for clear and open communication between school staff and families, and for a coordinated effort by all.

The *roles* of families are to provide ethical and spiritual guidance; to show interest in their children's endeavours; and to encourage attitudes toward learning and citizenship.

The *rights* of families are to be informed about school policy and the kinds of programs available to students; to have good communication and opportunities for discussion with school personnel regarding courses of study and other matters affecting their children's scholastic progress; and to be recognized as key participants in the education system.

The *responsibilities* of families are to ensure that their children put forward their best efforts and that they attend school regularly; to encourage good study habits and eagerness to learn; to keep abreast of student progress; to involve themselves in any disciplinary issues concerning their children; and to recognize the importance of open, constructive discourse with the school on matters concerning their children's education.

Teachers

Teachers are the primary element in delivering the education system. Their role in developing abilities and nurturing knowledge,

understanding, inquiry, reflection and confidence is significant. Teachers have, by example and guidance, the responsibility to promote in their students a striving for excellence. The successful conduct and supervision of the numerous and different activities within and outside the classroom call for varied qualities and skills on the part of the teacher. It is imperative, therefore, that teacher education and professional development be priorities within the educational system.

The *roles* of teachers are to endeavour to instil in their students the desire to learn; to contribute to the establishment of local and provincial education policy and the development of educational programs; to set high expectations of performance and behavior; to respect their students as individuals and to show, by example, that trust and respect are traits that can be shared by teacher and student; and to provide resource materials, information and experiences which stimulate learning and development.

The *rights* of teachers are to have the professional support of those engaged in the education process; to have reasonable working conditions, adequate resources and fair professional evaluation; and to be respected as individuals. Teachers should have the academic freedom to choose the method of instruction they feel will best suit the needs of their students, and the right to participate in the decision-making functions of the education system.

The *responsibilities* of teachers are to develop a positive and challenging learning environment through good classroom management; to be role models in the promotion of learning and behavior; and to use their time effectively. Teachers are responsible also for promoting learning, upgrading their professional abilities, and participating in the activities of the school.

Principals

A dual role of educational leadership and school management is filled by principals. Principals maintain the school program and are active in coordinating and communicating with other participants in education.

The *roles* of principals are to provide educational leadership and school management, and to promote optimal conditions for teacher effectiveness and student learning. Principals, as the key liaison between school and community, must protect the interests of students in their interaction with other participants in education.

The *rights* of principals are to manage the school within policy limits; to participate in the maintenance of a competent staff; and to expect the support of central office and school board.

The *responsibilities* of principals are to demonstrate leadership and effective supervision; to maintain effective instructional staff; to ensure adherence to the programs of studies and that they are offered in a manner that meets local needs; to be aware of all facets of the

curriculum; to ensure that students have the opportunity to learn; to delegate tasks; and to manage time and other resources.

School Staff

Collectively, teachers and principals have direct influence on the development of a positive, caring environment for learning. The school staff establishes standards for functioning within the school which influence the development of values and social skills.

The *roles* of the school staff are to foster a commitment to excellence and to stimulate positive values and social skills by example. In addition to developing competent, curious and challenged learners, the school staff should also develop a philosophy and standards for their school.

The *rights* of the school staff are to choose the method of delivery of programs to meet educational objectives, and to expect support from school boards, students, and families in meeting their objectives.

The *responsibilities* of the school staff are to provide an education in a sound learning environment and to facilitate good communication and participation by others in the education process.

Members of the Community

Community members, as representatives of organizations and groups, cooperate in education by sponsoring learning experiences and providing ongoing evaluations of program effectiveness through the identification of changing needs and perceptions.

The *roles* of the members of the community are to liaise with the school in an advisory role; to participate in providing work experience, work study, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs; and to provide a supportive environment for school operations.

The *rights* of community members are to be active participants in advising on the development of education programs.

The *responsibilities* of community members are to assist schools in the continuing development and improvement of education; to contribute to the moral and ethical values of the education system; and to provide input into the delivery of a sound system of education.

School Boards

Through the responsibility delegated to them by the province, school boards are the primary contact between the schools and the community at the district level. School boards implement and establish policy for the development of educational programs and the method of delivery.

The *roles* of the school board are to contribute to the development and establishment of policy; to provide educational leadership and to

implement provincial policies and programs; to provide educational services to all students within their jurisdiction; and to monitor and report on the achievement of educational results in the district.

The *rights* of the school board are to establish policy, guidelines and procedures for the operation of the school system; and to receive adequate funding to implement provincial policies and programs.

The *responsibilities* of the school board are to act as the primary bridge between the community and the school on policy matters; to recognize the significant role of parents, students, the community and others in the provision of educational services at the local level; to provide good management of money, materials and manpower in the school system; to evaluate the components of the system; to keep in touch with the changing scope of education; and to make sure that applicable policy is available.

Superintendents

Leadership and management roles are combined for the superintendent who provides liaison between the community, school board, and staff.

The *roles* of the superintendent are to manage the operation of the school system; to hire competent staff; and to provide advice and information to other participants.

The *rights* of the superintendent are to have the support of the school board; and to participate in the development of policies, guidelines and procedures.

The *responsibilities* of the superintendent are to provide educational leadership; to implement board policy; to communicate effectively; to be aware of the needs of the community; and to evaluate components of the education system according to policy.

Business, Industry and Labour

The provision of information and expertise by business, industry and labour relative to employment and careers is an important service to schools. A cooperative partnership between these agents and the school is desirable to provide a wide range of learning experiences to students, and to communicate to them the expectations and demands of the world of work.

The *roles* of business, industry and labour are to help students to become aware of the opportunities available to them in the world of work; to encourage the attainment of education; to communicate their standards and expectations; and to have input into program design.

The *rights* of business, industry and labour are to expect that graduates will be educated, competent and have positive work attitudes.

The *responsibilities* of business, industry and labour are to enhance

the system with their participation; to cooperate with work experience programs; to communicate their expectations and concerns; and to assist with career guidance. Priority needs to be given to establishing programs in new areas of demand.

Post-Secondary Education

Those who pass through the secondary school system must devote themselves to continuing study, especially if their primary aim is to prepare themselves for a trade or profession. In an age of rapidly growing technology and swiftly changing standards, there is need for a widening range of opportunities, and for programs that will serve the tourist and service industries. Opportunities for further education exist through the post-secondary institutions which offer a variety of programs designed to meet these needs.

The *roles* of post-secondary education are to provide for the continuation of education beyond the secondary school; and to provide a range of programs that respond to the interests of students and the needs of society.

The *rights* of post-secondary education are to expect that candidates seeking admission to post-secondary institutions have been adequately prepared for entry; and to have the support of all participants in the education process to enable them to achieve their goals.

The *responsibilities* of post-secondary education are to communicate with others engaged in the education process; to enunciate clearly and consistently their standards and expectations of students seeking entry to post-secondary institutions; to offer programs of the best quality; and to design programs that are relevant to the needs of students and society.

The Ministry of Education

The total operation of the education system is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. The different branches within the ministry are strictly subordinated to the Minister who is the political head of the department and, as such, the Minister must be aware of the needs and aspirations of all participants in the secondary education system.

The *roles* of the Ministry of Education are to define the goals of education and schooling; to identify the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be developed by students; to provide program leadership in developing programs; to assess program implementation; and to monitor the total functioning of the system.

The *rights* of the Ministry of Education are to accredit schools; to establish curriculum requirements; and to monitor and evaluate the performance of teachers, schools and school systems.

The *responsibilities* of the Ministry of Education are to assess the effectiveness of individual programs and the total education program;

to promote the value of education; and to provide educational leadership and development.

The Provincial Government

The Alberta government, on behalf of the people of the province, provides resources for the education system. The government also plays a leadership and advocacy role in setting overall policy and goals.

The *roles* of the government are to establish management systems, policies and objectives for education, provincially and locally; to establish a legal framework for education; to provide the necessary means for the development, administration and delivery of education services; to protect the public interest and to protect individual rights; to be accountable to the public for educational policy; to be responsible for the development of school curricula for the province; to provide for the ongoing review of programs; and to coordinate support services and agencies.

The *rights* of government are to establish and maintain an education system for Alberta students; to set standards and expect effective implementation and performance.

The *responsibilities* of government are to retain primary legislative responsibility for the establishment of schools and school jurisdictions; to develop programs of studies and establish curriculum guides and support documents; to provide for the certification of teachers, and for teacher inservice; to provide the necessary resources and support for the education system; and to develop policies for the evaluation and review of school curricula.

Recommendation

It is recommended that all participants involved in secondary education give priority to fulfilling their roles, respecting others' rights, and carrying out their responsibilities in a cooperative manner.

Educational Funding

It is expected that certain efficiencies will result from the implementation of many of the recommendations contained in this report. While the focus of recommendations is on making schools more effective, there are proposals which will require government support for quality improvement of educational programs. Curriculum changes, teacher in-service programs, and school accreditation processes are some of the recommendations which will create demands for additional funding.

Recommendation

It is recommended that changes and additions to programs be well planned, and supported with adequate funding.

Summary

For the system of secondary education to work well, it is imperative that all participants actively assume their roles and responsibilities. Educating students is a process which is open to influence by each participant and as such it is both responsive and vulnerable.

The aim of education is that students will progress toward their potential as vital and contributing members of society. The challenge to the participants is that they take up their respective roles and responsibilities, become actively committed to developing the best possible educational programs, and promote opportunities for learning and development.

REVIEW
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SECONDARY EDUCATION: FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

The basic goal of an education system is to prepare students for the present and the future. Students are best prepared when they possess both a broad base of competencies reflected by their attitudes, skills and knowledge, as well as demonstrable areas of specialization.

Secondary education is a preparatory stage for many, and a final stage of schooling for others. It is a complex enterprise when one considers the mandate to provide versatile, educated people for the community; people who are prepared for work and prepared for future training and continuing education.

Our world demands competence and resourceful adaptability, and that is the challenge which Alberta's secondary education system strives to meet. Every school must, then, be resourceful and adaptive, and work in cooperation with the many participants in education to provide opportunities which meet present and future societal and student needs.

Educational experiences provide a foundation of skills and competencies that help students with future career development, and at the same time affect the quality of their lives throughout each day. For schools to have a positive impact, programs must be adaptable to levels of student interest and ability. In all programs there must be standards and expectations which students strive to attain; every good school program must have an appropriate balance between the challenge of striving for excellence and the chance for success.

Educational programs must be guided by the awareness of varying student abilities and rates of learning. The education system must recognize these individual differences and be innovative and responsive in providing adequate programming. Programs must also be challenging to all students in the expectation that they will rise to the challenge, become more aware, more involved and more confident in their emerging abilities, and more accepting of their obligation to do their best.

Students should devote themselves to continuing involvement with learning and the application of acquired knowledge which will shape their future. They should also develop a positive attitude toward change, with a strong base of divergent skills and adaptive abilities. These qualities, along with experience in problem-solving and decision-making, will enhance students' ability to function effectively

in a changing world. The fundamental belief in lifelong learning should be valued and promoted.

As the individual student must be adaptable to meet emerging requirements of the present and future, so too must the structures of education be adaptable. The education system should be subject to assessment and review. In addressing present and anticipated future needs, several basic areas of competency have been identified which will stand the student in good stead for all time. These competencies include communication skills, computation skills, awareness of scientific investigation and application, informed citizenship, developing research and study skills, reflective thinking abilities, positive attitudes toward the whole process of learning, and being self-directed with a good degree of self-responsibility.

Career preparation has been identified as an important aspect of secondary education. This preparation can be for direct job entry or entry into post-secondary educational institutions. Secondary education represents only one stage of the process of career development, although it is an important stage in that students are expected to begin as children and finish as adults. In some ways, secondary education is a rite of passage which profoundly affects students who pass through it. The best goal of general career preparation for students is attaining a well-founded belief in their own individual abilities and demonstrating confidence in making a positive and meaningful impact on their world.

The school must provide generic work skills and foster in students the development of attitudes and behavior which will be conducive to their success as employees and contributing members of society. While some specific job training is available in the secondary education program, the goal remains to educate students so that a wide range of opportunities is open to them. To this end, many secondary schools provide vocational programs, work experience and business education, as well as providing career counselling and career exploration.

While it is accepted that the school plays a significant role in educating students, there is also recognition of the sharing of that responsibility among schools, parents, students and the community at large. It is incumbent upon all participants in the educational system to cooperate, share responsibility, provide support and stimulate innovation in educational programs. It follows that there is also a need for definition of roles and support for the various participants in the education system, increased coordination of services, and more community and parent involvement with school programs.

Continuing good communication between parents and school staff will foster awareness about school programs and the implications of their children's involvement. The education system must be adaptive to increased participation by parents and community agencies. Any further moves toward the concept of the school as a learning centre for the community depends upon the support of all participants.

Secondary education involves many participants who all have the opportunity to contribute to an effective secondary school program. While it is accepted that these six years of education represent just one stage of an individual's development, they are vital years and hold a great deal of potential for students who make a commitment to learning.

The focus of secondary education must be toward the future, from a solid base of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that provide preparation for participating in society as confident and competent individuals in the present.

THE GOALS OF BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALBERTA

Goals are statements which indicate what is to be achieved or worked toward. In relation to basic education, goals serve several functions:

1. They identify the distinctive role of the school and its contribution to the total education of youth.
2. They provide purpose and direction to curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation.
3. They enable parents, teachers and the community at large to develop a common understanding of what schools are trying to achieve.

Society must periodically re-examine the goals of its schools. Changes in emphasis and minor adjustments of the basic goals may be required from time to time to keep pace with social change.

This statement of goals is intended to direct education for Grades 1 through 12 in Alberta schools. It is the basis from which specific objectives for various subjects and grades shall be developed.

While the school makes a very important contribution to education, it is only one of the agencies involved in the education of youth. The home, the church, the media and community organizations are very significant influences on children. It is useful, therefore, to delineate the role of schooling in education.

Education refers to all the learning experiences the individual has in interacting with the physical and social environment; it is a continuing and lifelong process. Schooling, which has a more limited purpose, refers to the learning activities planned and conducted by a formally structured agency which influences individuals during a specified period. There is, of course, a very close relationship between schooling and education — the learning which occurs in school influences and is influenced by what is learned outside the school.

Goals of Schooling

Schooling, as part of education, accepts primary and distinctive responsibility for specific goals basic to the broader goals of education. Programs and activities shall be planned, taught and evaluated on the

basis of these specific goals in order that students:

1. Develop competencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
2. Acquire basic knowledge and develop skills and attitudes in mathematics, the practical and fine arts, the sciences, and the social studies (including history and geography), with appropriate local, national, and international emphasis in each.
3. Develop the learning skills of finding, organizing, analyzing, and applying information in a constructive and objective manner.
4. Acquire knowledge and develop skills, attitudes and habits which contribute to physical, mental and social well-being.
5. Develop an understanding of the meaning, responsibilities, and benefits of active citizenship at the local, national and international levels.
6. Acquire knowledge and develop skills, attitudes, and habits required to respond to the opportunities and expectations of the world of work.

Because the above goals are highly interrelated, each complementing and reinforcing the other, priority ranking among them is not suggested. It is recognized that in sequencing learning activities for students some goals are emphasized earlier than others; however, in relation to the total years of schooling, they are of equal importance.

In working toward the attainment of its goals, the school will strive for excellence. However, the degree of individual achievement also depends on student ability and motivation as well as support from the home. Completion of diploma requirements is expected to provide the graduate with basic preparation for lifelong learning. Dependent on program choices, the diploma also enables job entry or further formal study.

Goals of Education

Achievement of the broader goals of education must be viewed as a shared responsibility of the community. Maximum learning occurs when the efforts and expectations of various agencies affecting children complement each other. Recognizing the learning that has or has not occurred through various community influences, among which the home is the most important, the school will strive to:

1. Develop intellectual curiosity and a desire for lifelong learning.
2. Develop the ability to get along with people of varying backgrounds, beliefs and lifestyles.
3. Develop a sense of community responsibility which embraces respect for law and authority, public and private property, and the rights of others.

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4. Develop self-discipline, self-understanding and a positive self-concept through realistic appraisal of one's capabilities and limitations.
 5. Develop an appreciation for tradition and the ability to understand and respond to change as it occurs in personal life and society.
 6. Develop skills for effective utilization of financial resources and leisure time and for constructive involvement in community endeavours.
 7. Develop an appreciation for the role of the family in society.
 8. Develop an interest in cultural and recreational pursuits.
 9. Develop a commitment to the careful use of natural resources and to the preservation and improvement of the physical environment.
 10. Develop a sense of purpose in life and ethical or spiritual values which respect the worth of the individual, justice, fair play and fundamental rights, responsibilities and freedoms.

The ultimate aim of education is to develop the abilities of individuals in order that they might fulfil their personal aspirations while making a positive contribution to society, a positive contribution to our world.

REVIEW
OF
SECONDARY
PROGRAMS

**Alberta Secondary
Education Review:
Research Basis**

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| REVIEW |
| OF |
| SECONDARY |
| PROGRAMS |

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Butt, Richard. *Pioneering the Future: Educational Implications and Policy Directions for Alberta Secondary Schools*. The University of Lethbridge, July, 1984.

Lawson, R.F., and Stevenson, Barbara. *Comparative Studies Project*. The University of Calgary, June, 1984.

Mitchell, John J. *The Alberta Secondary Student: Some General Growth Profiles*. The University of Alberta, June, 1984.

Sheehan, Nancy M. *Educational Developments, Societal Conditions and the Secondary School Curriculum in Alberta: An Historical Overview*. The University of Calgary, June, 1984.

A large number of documents from a variety of sources were consulted during the Secondary Education Review. These publications are listed in Appendix A.

Alberta Education wishes to thank the many people who assisted in the compilation, analysis and synthesis of the information presented in this document.

PART

I

INTRODUCTION

In February 1984, the Honourable David King, Minister of Education, initiated a review of Alberta's secondary education program. Information was sought from a variety of sources to form a broad knowledge base from which to assess current concerns in education and upon which to establish principles for revising the secondary education programs.

The views and concerns expressed by Albertans are summarized in a companion document, *Alberta's Secondary Education Program: The Public's View*. In addition, educational input was collected, analyzed and summarized from selected reports published by Alberta Education and other Canadian agencies. Significant documents on current education reform in Canada, in the United States and in Europe were perused, including books recently published. A list of the materials reviewed is included in Appendix A of this document.

In addition, four studies were commissioned by Alberta Education, which would address issues relevant to the review. These studies are:

Educational Developments, Societal Conditions and the Secondary School Curriculum in Alberta: An Historical Overview, by Dr. Nancy Sheehan, The University of Calgary.

The Alberta Secondary Student: Some General Growth Profiles, by Dr. John J. Mitchell, The University of Alberta.

Comparative Studies Project, by Dr. Richard F. Lawson, The University of Calgary.

Pioneering the Future: Educational Implications and Policy Directions for Alberta Secondary Schools, by Dr. Richard Butt, The University of Lethbridge.

This booklet summarizes the content presented in these studies. For groups and associations interested in pursuing a more detailed analysis of these studies, limited copies of the original documents are available upon request.

PART

II

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This section summarizes the contents of *Educational Developments, Societal Conditions and the Secondary School Curriculum in Alberta: An Historical Overview*, a paper prepared by Dr. Nancy Sheehan.

The Early Years

In 1905, Alberta inherited a school organization, a program of studies and a financing arrangement from the Northwest Territories. A locally elected board of trustees was responsible for building, equipping and operating the school. Its curriculum, textbooks, inspectors, examinations, as well as teacher training and certification were centralized under a minister in the Department of Education. The program of studies was academic, bookish and memory-orientated.

A booming economy during the first decade enhanced by record wheat production and sales meant a rapid increase in population resulting in a need for services. Changes before 1920 were minor but societal pressures were beginning to influence the schools: Greek was added in 1912 at the request of The University of Alberta; high school cadet corps were established; agricultural schools were opened by a government that needed the farmers' vote, and because it was felt that homesteaders did not farm efficiently; vocational and technical courses were added as the economy developed and diversified. In addition, an already small high school enrolment was further reduced by students enlisting in the war or doing much-needed farm work. The Department of Education lowered the pass mark to 25 per cent in any subject for these students; in effect, giving academic credit for practical, unrelated experience.

These changes, as well as international developments and the belief that the curriculum concentrated on aspects unrelated to life, brought about a review of the program of studies. In 1923, recommendations were submitted in a final report, and included fewer subjects and passing by subject rather than by grade to try to reduce the high failure rate in provincial examinations. Diplomas in general, agricultural, commercial and technical education were added to the matriculation and normal school entrance diplomas. This multi-diploma program, which was to provide for the academically disinterested student and to supply trained personnel for the industrial sector, did not meet with success. In 1935, twelve years later, only 181

of 2,458 graduates received other than the matriculation or normal school entrance diplomas. Among the several reasons for this was the prestige associated with the more academic programs as well as the lack of offerings in small schools.

Another secondary education review took place toward the end of the twenties. No major changes were recommended and, therefore, high school programs remained academic and controlled by the departmental examination requirements. And yet, the world outside was changing. No longer a pioneer society, Alberta, like the rest of Canada had survived and matured during the war. Prohibition, the extension of the vote to include women, development of labor unions, the discovery of oil, the extension of radio, farm mechanization, improvements of highways and a trend toward urbanization had very little immediate impact on the school curriculum.

The 1930's: Depression, A New Government and Major Reform

The school and its curriculum were affected by the economy. The worldwide recession, the stock market collapse and agricultural failure triggered the depression of the thirties. Migration from the rural areas reduced the population supporting rural schools; lack of jobs kept students in school longer; money was lacking for resources, teachers and buildings. More students were taking academic programs that were thought to be impractical by many.

In addition to societal developments, psychology, testing and measurement, and curriculum theory with an emphasis on the needs, interests and abilities of the learner, influenced the curriculum committee of 1934. These influences were reflected in the committee's recommendations which spurred wholesale educational reform, particularly following the election of the Social Credit government in 1935.

A major organizational change brought about a two-tier secondary school system. Instead of a four-year high school, a three-year junior high school followed by a three-year senior high school developed. The dual role of the junior high school was to prepare some students for entry into senior high school and others to leave school with a sense of accomplishment. A required core of subjects for all students was proposed, with elective subjects to be available according to individual interests and aptitudes. The electives would fall into three categories: cultural appreciation, such as music, art or craftwork; exploratory courses to assess the personal resources of students, such as shop, home economics, typing, commercial art; and pre-vocational courses especially for those not proceeding beyond junior high school.

A one-diploma senior high school program with a required core of courses and a wide choice of electives on a credit system basis was introduced. It was believed that removal of examinations at the end of Grades 10 and 11 would permit students of varying interests and

abilities to obtain a diploma. It would allow all sizes of high schools to offer some non-academic options. In effect, academic and non-academic subjects would become a part of every student's package. Because of the choices which students had to make, it was felt they needed counselling. Therefore, the curriculum committee recommended in 1938 a course to provide guidance in problems of adolescent personality and vocational orientation. In addition, it approved a proposal to make the teaching of oral and written English the responsibility of all teachers.

These changes, along with the change from districts to divisions and the recognition of the Alberta Teachers' Association, had the potential to improve secondary school offerings throughout the province. However, to achieve this would have required better trained teachers and better facilities and, even in the urban areas, these requirements were difficult to meet. The academic nature of the school remained uppermost. This was for a variety of reasons, one of which was that traditional subjects required less in the way of space, resources and equipment than did the newer subjects. In addition, perhaps, parents and children sought the financial security of the professions and white-collar jobs which required academic, rather than vocational, courses.

The 1940's and 1950's: War, Reconstruction and a Royal Commission

Again, the outbreak of war affected the school and curriculum. Although the economy improved bringing the potential availability of more money for education, the effects of the war were not so positive. Resources and equipment for technical and vocational programs were unavailable and construction of regional/composite high schools was curtailed because of a lack of manpower and materials. In addition, students and teachers were leaving for other readily available jobs or to help in the war effort.

Curriculum planners were caught in a tough situation. For the new program to be successful, a broad range of courses and more instructional time were needed to create meaningful experiences that would acquaint students with the realities of life. Besides the lack of well prepared, experienced and progressive teachers there was little time for school social activities, guidance or student counselling. Study groups were set up to revise curricula and to plan school programs for democratic living in a democratic manner. One of the results of these studies was a proposal, never put into effect, recommending the addition of a fourth year to the senior high school program because it was thought that the English and social studies programs really required four years. As well, the extra year would allow time for more adequate training in the democratic processes through "social living, more physical and social activities and more opportunities for experience rather than mere knowledge" (Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1943, p. 15-17).

The curriculum work of the forties did not produce fundamental changes and the revisions were not very successful. The high schools generally failed to provide technical, vocational programs. Often, elective courses became compulsory because of a lack of optional subjects. Agriculture courses were not available in an agricultural province. Despite an increased high school enrolment, a one-diploma program, regional and composite high schools and a philosophy that included education for democracy, Sheehan concludes that the academic program continued its tight rein on the system.

In the fifties, schools had a difficult time finding space, teachers and courses as the 'baby boom' children reached school age, while immigration and industrialization increased. The launching of Sputnik by the Russians confirmed the public's belief that schools in North America, including Alberta, were inadequate. A Royal Commission on Education, the Cameron Commission, was appointed to assess the situation. The majority of comments to the commission concerned the curriculum and its perceived lack of intellectual rigor. That only six per cent of high school students proceeded to university while every high school had to offer the matriculation package was seen as a problem. In addition, although 110 subjects were authorized for students, choice was limited by the requirements of university faculties and the size of the high school.

Emphasis on mastery of information, specified content and examinations to counteract progressive educational ideas, were suggested by the commission. The school's role in manpower training was another focus of the Cameron Commission's recommendations. The industrial needs of society and the trend toward more students going to high school resulted in suggestions favoring specialization in fine arts, business education and many vocational fields. Another recommendation called for a study of the school year structure, in particular the semester system, to facilitate serving the large and varied post-war student population, and the year-round use of physical facilities.

The 1960's and 1970's: More Money, More Students, More Programs

The sixties was a decade of prosperity and change, a decade of youth and of rights movements, a decade of changing moral and sexual standards. It was a time of unconventional behavior, of rebellion against accepted norms, traditions and authority. Progressive theories stressing process rather than content, understanding rather than facts, flexibility rather than rigidity, which had been introduced in the thirties and forgotten in the forties and fifties, became the educational watchwords of the sixties.

Change was evident in the attitude toward education's role in society. The private sector's cry for better trained workers and the government's need to relieve unemployment and to expand the economy resulted in funds for technical and vocational training. An

abundance of resource material became available. Composite high schools with large vocational components were built and their offerings expanded to meet the needs of the changing and varied student population. Programs in as many as twenty-four fields were introduced. Schools adopted the semester system to suit their own needs without, however, implementing the proposal of year round schooling. There was a wide range of specialized teachers in commercial, vocational and agricultural areas, as well as teachers for the handicapped.

Finally, three decades after the high school revision of 1936, the province really began to provide a high school education for students not academically inclined or interested. School courses and programs began to reflect and to be structured toward the many career opportunities and possibilities of the Alberta of the 1960's.

In the 1970's, Alberta society had become increasingly complex and many Albertans were of the opinion that its institutions were crumbling. The unconventionality of the sixties, the rebellion against authority and traditional values, as well as the increasing rate of marital breakdown, drugs and alcohol consumption, and rising crime statistics caused concern. A booming economy, a rapidly increasing and more diverse population, as well as changing technology, produced an unstable society.

As society began to experience anew the stress of change, the schools were blamed for having contributed to the problems by not maintaining a more traditional structure. However, the schools were receiving conflicting messages. There was pressure on the schools to solve the ills of society, particularly to restore lost traditional values. On the other hand, money was available to try out new ideas which advocated individuality and freedom and which questioned traditional courses and methodology. Young people were caught between the adults' nostalgic yearnings for traditional values and society's growing secularization and emphasis on materialism as wealth and urbanization increased.

The burden of responding to the need to restore stability to this multicultural and diverse society fell especially on social studies. A values-oriented curriculum was introduced to help students develop a set of values, learn how to make decisions and how to make the future world a more ideal place in which to live. Not taken into consideration was the wisdom of charging one course and one age group — our youth — with the responsibility for correcting the perceived wrongs of a turbulent era. In fact, a course devised as a means of re-establishing traditional values appeared to many to be doing just the opposite.

The Alberta of the 1970's was a vastly changed province from the one upon which the Cameron Commission of 1959 was based. Another commission, chaired by Walter Worth, published its report (*A Choice of Futures*) in 1972, reflecting the changing social and economic climate of the sixties as well as the more sophisticated trends in educational development. Specialized schools, variety in programs,

parental involvement and student advisory councils were some of the report's suggestions. To allow more room for individual growth, and to reflect educational research advocating the skills of critical analysis and synthesis for students, departmental examinations came into disfavor. It was thought that better educated teachers could assess their students more accurately and fairly. Expo 67, the Quebec crisis, and a resurgence in nationalism, were reflected in the pleas for more Canadian content, for bilingualism and for a multicultural emphasis, particularly in Alberta. The right of all students to equal educational opportunity was demonstrated most noticeably by the entry of students with handicaps into the mainstream of the school.

With a wide variety of courses, options and programs to choose from, with provincial examinations no longer required, with student and parent dialogue a part of the process, with less stress on factual knowledge, with a high school curriculum that had something for everyone, and school plants that used all the technology that society had developed, the schools of the seventies were vastly different from their counterparts of preceding generations.

Conclusion

With the bloom off Alberta's economy, the eighties brought different challenges to the schools. Concern for the traditional values once again surfaced. The quality of education was questioned by business, by the universities and by the public in general. A "back to the basics" movement had begun. The province began re-introducing departmental examinations, while the universities developed writing tests for incoming students.

Looking back over the past century, a distinct pattern emerges that links societal change and developments in educational research to modification in the school curriculum. Over the course of eighty years, schools have changed. No longer are they academic, intellectual institutions preparing students for entrance to universities and professions and appealing to a small proportion of the population. They now consist of programs in diverse areas preparing a broad spectrum of youth for the workforce, for a variety of post-secondary institutions, as well as for living in a complex society. Larger numbers are attending and staying in school longer. At the same time, schools are providing education in areas previously the responsibility of other institutions such as the church and the family.

However, in spite of all the reforms and reform efforts, Sheehan believes that the comments made by TheodoreSizer on American education are valid generally for Alberta. Sizer states that as an organization the high school has changed little over the century: students are grouped by age; content is organized by departments; the primary methodology is the lecture; the school year is from Labour Day to mid-June; and accomplishment is measured in terms of credits earned and time spent. Sheehan notes that around the academic core the secondary school curriculum has added courses to satisfy the

demands of a broader proportion of the population but these continue to be delivered in much the same manner as over the years. The program with the most prestige, the program that is the centre of most secondary schools, and the program that attracts the bright, upwardly mobile student and parent continues to be the matriculation program. This perhaps suggests that despite pedagogical developments and social, political and economic changes, the secondary school curriculum has exhibited a stubborn continuity with its academic core.

However, society and the purpose of the high school have changed because besides educational activities, there is now a sociological focus in the school. These two functions vie for attention and are often at odds with each other. As Sheehan concludes, "The challenge to reformers is to reconcile the educational and social roles of an institution serving a widely different population in terms of abilities and backgrounds, and to prepare that population for both today and for the unknown of tomorrow" (page 24).

TODAY'S ADOLESCENT

This section is a summary of the paper on adolescents commissioned by the Secondary Education Review and prepared by Dr. John J. Mitchell. This paper, *The Alberta Secondary Student: Some General Growth Profiles*, portrays the commonalities which adolescents share with one another. Studying the general traits shared by youth can help us to understand the general abilities found at certain ages, to predict trends in behavior, and to estimate the limitations of certain groups.

The adolescent period served by secondary schools can be divided into two periods, early and middle adolescence which broadly correspond to students in junior and senior high school programs. Early adolescents straddle the worlds of childhood and adolescence, sometimes thinking as one and then as the other, sometimes feeling as one and then the other. They alternate between being children and being adolescents. Middle adolescence, on the other hand, is that period when young people, no longer feeling the pull of childhood, prepare to enter into adulthood.

Early Adolescence

Early adolescence is for most youth a period of development and physical change, marked by significant growth patterns. Neither children nor as yet fully developed adolescents, students in this age group (Grades 7 to 9) are particularly sensitive and vulnerable as they try to come to terms with changes in roles and status during the transition from childhood to adolescence. These changes, occurring as they do in the first half of secondary school life, are not without their attendant stresses.

To assess the impact of stress during this stage of transition it is important to distinguish between *profound* and *non-profound* stress. Profound stress, when sustained over a period of time, results in self-destructive symptoms, in exaggerated use of defense mechanisms, in neuroses, or even psychoses. Non-profound stress, on the other hand, is not debilitating, even when sustained over a long period of time.

Some of the more significant growth trends are the rapid physical changes and the rise of new emotions which have a marked affect on these students, changing the happy pre-adolescent into a moody, unresponsive youth for whom life has become a burden. Sensitive to criticism, yet needing the acknowledgement and acceptance of peers

and adults, this is a particularly stressful time, the effect of which impacts on other emotional areas: if early adolescents do not get positive affirmation from outside sources, self-doubt is increased. This poor self-image nourishes fearfulness and produces stress; this stress, in turn, causes anguish, irritation and inconvenience; it disrupts friendships and sometimes family unity. These examples of non-profound stress are symptoms of a difficult stage of growth rather than manifestations of future neuroses.

Human sexuality falls into the low stress category, largely because immaturity affords protection against many of its frustrations. The anxiety of a lover's quarrel, or the pain of romantic rejection are rarely experienced in the early adolescent community.

The stress which comes from responsibility is comparatively absent because youth of this age do not have much responsibility. The intellect is not fully developed, so that the meaning and purpose of life is not yet seriously questioned. The seeming futility of life, perhaps the most powerful precursor to adolescent suicide, is not strongly felt during early adolescence. Likewise, alcohol and drug abuse are less common than in later adolescence.

Intelligence is blossoming but it is not as sophisticated as the youngsters themselves believe it to be. The ability to make sound judgments and to be detached from selfish interests is not fully developed. Youth of this age are all in school, therefore their lives revolve around school and its environs. They are *easy* to teach because they believe in the power of authority; their thought processes are geared to assimilate rather than to analyze, and they have a limited ability to disagree with ideas beyond their experience. Conversely, however, they are *difficult* to teach because they think they know more than they do, because they question better than they understand, and because their powers of induction are still weak when compared with older adolescents.

Early adolescents are more social than philosophical, more impulsive than reflective, more experimental than cautious. Their concerns are immediate rather than distant. They are not naturally cooperative, but they are capable of genuine sharing — under the right conditions. Their sense of self is not well-defined because they are in the process of discovering their likes and dislikes, as well as their strengths and weaknesses. Their morality is based more on what they have absorbed from their culture rather than from thoughtfully developed principles. Their conscience is more pragmatic than ideal and more egocentric than altruistic.

Any overview, however brief, of the commonalities which adolescents share with one another would be incomplete without a reminder that early adolescence is only the beginning of the teen years. There is no sharp divider separating this group from that of secondary students in Grades 10, 11 and 12, the middle adolescent group. These ages have considerable overlap. For example, many youngsters in Grade 9 are, in most respects, middle adolescents rather than early adolescents.

In summary, early adolescence is a period of abundant stress, but essentially of the non-profound variety. The vast majority of youngsters accommodate rather well to the storm and stress of this age.

Middle Adolescence

Middle adolescents are more socially mature, have greater self-discipline, are generally more selective in their choice of friends, better at avoiding self-defeating relationships, and relate better to the opposite sex. There still exists a strong need for the group togetherness or affiliation they experienced as early adolescents to prevent loneliness and isolation.

There is a sharp increase in pregnancies during this period as these middle adolescents become more sexually aware. The uncertainty of their social network adds pressure to an already difficult time of life, resulting in periodic outbursts of self-assertion.

It is during the period of middle adolescence that intellectual abilities achieve their greatest effectiveness. Adolescents can now examine all aspects of an issue and deal with the abstract and theoretical. They are interested in the ideal and in life and death issues. They can investigate ideas beyond reality as presently understood. Because of the increased ability to create and examine possibilities, adolescent political thought undergoes important changes. Their increased intellectual ability allows them to consider future possibilities and to assess the plausibility of options in making decisions which will influence their future.

They can apply their new powers to their own thought processes. This results in more precise thought and the detection of errors. However, it also encourages self-doubt as they examine ideas from more than an egocentric point of view. Therefore, these more mature mental processes which permit scientific thought at the same time introduce the anguish of self-analysis. The more accurate self-assessment reveals weak or hidden parts of the personality, creating stress, especially for those who are low in ability or social attractiveness.

Although youth generally come to a realistic acceptance of their limitations, for some it deteriorates into a form of self-pity. They hate the society which undervalues them. Since the adolescent emotions become stronger, sorrow, jealousy, anger and hatred, add to the stress of this period. This increased stress can lead to all forms of self-destructive behavior which escalates during middle adolescence. Suicides, homicides, and physical assaults increase as do deaths from accidents. Drug-related deaths, from overdoses and suicides while under the influence of drugs or the depression induced by drugs, also rise. The more severe illnesses such as depression, schizophrenia and paranoia are more frequent than in early adolescence. Mitchell believes that generally one can say of the Alberta secondary student: as age increases so also does the incidence of virtually all forms of serious emotional disturbances.

This is a critical time for adjustment to school. Youth for whom school is not socially rewarding or for whom learning does not improve job prospects tend to drop out. Those for whom it offers social rewards and provides credentials for future success rarely drop out.

In summary, the middle adolescent has become an individual with more idealistic, more theoretical and more sophisticated thought processes, producing a greater need for freedom and choice in decision-making. These thought processes permit introspection producing a more realistic self-evaluation. However, this may lead to excessive self-doubt and emotional disturbance. Changes in socialization allow greater self-autonomy, more complicated relationships with the family unit and increased interest in the opposite sex.

Adolescent Needs

The satisfaction of the emotional and psychological needs of this period is fundamental to the healthy human development. Adolescents are future-directed and therefore, filled with hope for the life that lies ahead. They require a certain amount of order, certainty and security in their world so that they can feel reasonably certain of fulfilling their aspirations. From this "safe" position, they can seek new ways of satisfying their needs, while being able to judge what will likely occur as a result of certain behavior. Adolescents maturing into adulthood want to have the freedom to make choices and to experience the results of those choices. This need to exercise choice, to enlarge the range and quality of satisfaction, is the forerunner of maturity and self-actualization in adults.

All human beings, as social individuals, have a strong need for acceptance in and of themselves by others, regardless of their achievements. Adolescents, not sure of themselves, have a particular need to experience this acceptance as well as their own identity, integrity and worthwhileness. When society offers little hope for meaningful participation and involvement, this need is frustrated.

Adolescents have the capacity and the desire to make choices. In addition, they require freedom to exercise these choices.

Adolescents seek some value or belief system, to which they can commit themselves. Some psychologists believe that serious consequences result from the absence of a system of values.

Although adolescents' ability to analyze the moral implications of behavior would make this an appropriate time for courses in interpersonal development and moral decisions, schools continue to focus on academic subjects.

The fundamental needs of adolescents are those which integrate the diverse elements of human nature so that as an individual, each adolescent can be counted on to contribute to the requirements of society while maintaining purpose and direction within self.

Adolescents, like adults, can satisfy their personal needs only when their behavior contributes to the satisfaction of the needs of others. However, as Dr. Mitchell indicates, secondary schools, in their present format, isolate students from the larger community, preventing them from making meaningful contributions to society.

PART
IV

SECONDARY EDUCATION: OTHER NATIONS

This section gives a brief overview of Dr. Lawson's final report, *Comparative Studies Project, Part 2: Interpretation Report*. In assessing the applicability of educational practices in other countries, Lawson warns that we must be careful to distinguish between aspects which are potentially useful to Alberta and those which are not transferable. Objective and value choices made by various countries may represent universals common to all cultures or they may be based on the unique needs of a particular society. Those based on the uniqueness of a particular area are not applicable to Alberta while those which are universal or have a common base of experience in our culture may be of use.

Choice of areas to be studied was based on the relationship to Canadian educational traditions as well as noteworthy or innovative methods or structures at the secondary level. Countries selected include the United Kingdom, The Federal Republic of Germany, The German Democratic Republic, Japan, Sweden, France and the Soviet Union. Together they give a comprehensive picture of secondary education in industrialized countries.

The American states were selected following review of educational documents and consultation with educational agencies in the United States. These were California, Maryland, Minnesota, Texas and Alaska.

Secondary Education in Selected European Countries and Japan

In general, the educational systems of the countries studied have a shorter elementary level than Alberta's with a longer intermediate (junior high) level which has a broad and comprehensive curriculum. The upper secondary level (senior high) has a diversity of programs, but it is not compulsory in most of the countries studied.

Current trends in curriculum include treating mathematics and science as dynamic subjects with changing content. These subjects are supplemented with technology at the upper secondary level and languages at the lower level. There is a strong emphasis on study of the native language, as well as one or more foreign languages with emphasis on fluency and use. An accent on aesthetic and practical studies is increasingly evident, sometimes in special schools. This is in agreement with the increased acceptance of the secondary school's

responsibility for personal and social development as well as for occupational preparation.

Value teaching tends to be handled through the teaching of religion or moral education or the involvement of youth in extracurricular social and productive activities with ideological direction.

Private schools vary in their purpose across the systems studied. In general, the stronger the commitment to public education, that is, to respond and change according to public need, the weaker the place of private schools. Alternatives are generally built into the public system through program options, extracurricular provisions or schools with special emphasis.

Clearly the area of greatest activity and change in the countries studied is that of vocational and technical education. There is some vocational-technical instruction in the secondary level everywhere and it is accepted as an area of general education. In East European countries a vocational or work orientation is present in the entire system. Expansion in these areas is common throughout all the countries studied. There is liaison between the school and industry with efforts at joint authority and public responsibility for vocational and technical training and relating it to the work place. Alternating periods of work and studies are becoming acceptable. What emerges as the dominant pattern is a varied but egalitarian system with a closer work-school integration, involving other agencies and alternating through school and non-school periods with a shift from the traditional priority of subjects. There is improved articulation of vocational systems as well as return and extension possibilities for working youth and adults.

There is however, no drop in standards or in required content of courses. In countries studied, there appears to be a higher demand than in Canada, both in length of schooling time and in actual content of the curriculum. At the end of the secondary level, school marks or social behavior assessment may be included but standard examinations continue to be the main criterion for access to higher education or university in most countries.

With greater expectations in vocational and technical education, inservice opportunities for teachers have increased and in some cases have led to new institutional branches such as Japan's College for Inservice. Competency reviews are a regular procedure in some countries. In addition, efforts are being made to improve teacher education programs and the selection of teacher candidates.

In some countries, planning for change is done centrally, but others place greater emphasis on local involvement. However, all seem to rely to a great extent on professional expertise in planning and interpreting policy or translating central decisions into practice. The educational structure has a close link with the political structure of the nation but in all countries there is a common reinforcement of central authority as well as that of the local school and community. Authority

is clearly a watchword of the 80's, but so is openness to community and reliance on professional assistance for policy decisions.

Problems exist in all countries and it is obvious that the task of educational reform is formidable. Among the difficulties evident are the bureaucracy of existing administrative structures and increasing economic stringency while at the same time there is a greater need for more teachers for differentiated upper secondary levels. The relationship of general to vocational education and how to lower the traditional barriers to provide for subject replacement raises concern. In addition, incomplete arrangements exist for inter-provincial mobility of students in federal systems; and there is actual disparity in education as a result of local school autonomy.

Much of the reform discussion in these countries refers to flexibility and opening of opportunities. It is important to consider these trends against the backdrop of traditional rigidities and narrowly defined standards of European education.

Secondary Education in Selected American States

In the American states, one sees a diversity of efforts to cope with change in society. A striking aspect is the encouragement by the state through incentive funding for local initiatives such as curriculum development, community involvement, experimental delivery systems, inter-district programs, local school improvements, student achievement and teacher professional development. The efforts of some states to respond to multicultural needs by ethnic and foreign language policy merits consideration in Alberta. Other aspects of interest are the articulation between elementary and secondary schools and the required semester of computer studies for every high school student. Promotion of alternatives within the system, such as specialized high schools, curriculum clusters and business partnerships, meet individual needs and allow for institutional creativity. Because of this diversity, there is need for and a great emphasis on student counselling.

State leadership in the development of technology and the provision of teacher inservice opportunities as well as model plans to assist districts in their own planning is evident. Instructional priorities are determined with local input and there is an ongoing process of innovation. Research efforts focus on teaching effectiveness and new ideas in education.

Centrally regulated state planning with affirmation of the intellectual purpose of the high school and curriculum tightening indicate a hardening of achievement standards in some states. Considerations include proposing that the regular school day be devoted exclusively to academic work while the hours before and after be utilized for extra-curricular, remedial and community activities. In Texas, state-mandated competency based curriculum is spelled out in

detail with an exit test of objectives which every student must pass. Lawson believes that what may be recommended in effort, standard and optimism is countered by a procedure which appears unduly restrictive, potentially bureaucratic and likely to stifle professional initiative.

Wherever there is individual and school variation, the burden of success falls on teachers. The most rigorous and uniform standards of teacher education and certification before teaching as well as staff development before completion of credentialing apply in California and Texas. Proposals regarding teacher performance are stringent. Teacher education institutions are to undergo rigorous evaluations. There is legislation for standardized testing before entry into teacher education programs, and proficiency testing for teachers. Although these recommendations in such specific form appear to be restrictive and possibly regressive, some of the ideas regarding teacher proficiency testing, pre and inservice developments and career ladders for teachers may be appealing to the general public. In addition, Lawson believes that the proposal to attach a school to each teacher education facility may supply the missing link in present theory-to-practice training.

There are support activities for teachers to enhance mathematics and science teaching. These include inservice opportunities and education-business alliances. Service centres are provided for technical assistance in computers.

The study of education in Alaska revealed innovative attempts in outreach programs through electronic curriculum packages. The concept of small high schools with cultural as well as academic programs, although commendable in principle, poses serious problems of standards. However, the generosity of state funding, the pattern of community involvement, teacher professional development and the promotion of programs related to the geographic-economic situation of the state are to be commended.

In summary, current reforms in the selected areas tend to be conservative, emphasizing content and standards; they are egalitarian, attempting to reach and retain more youth, but in different ways; and they are practical, with indirect, but frequently direct economic reference. They affirm the intellectual purpose of secondary education. Other non-academic programs or extra-curricular activities are organized around the basic studies. Mathematics and science are treated as dynamic subjects with changing content. A strong literature and culture content in the study of the national language as well as foreign language study and the treatment of social sciences as one or more disciplines are of relevance to Alberta. Successful individual achievement appears to be related to personal discipline or behavior control, selectivity and known standards. There are opportunities for concentration on a vocational line of study in high school.

The least disturbing arrangement for alternative programs appears to be that of integrating them with existing programs or schools. Vocational-technical education is the fastest growing area, offering

flexibility to encourage continuation of school for working youth. Joint responsibility by a variety of agencies, not just the school, for vocational education is developing.

The political contact points for current school reforms are the ministry as well as the local school or community. The modernized form of the inspectorate with highly qualified inspectors carrying information and assistance from the ministry may be a missing link in some countries. Broad community participation in planning and the availability of technical assistance are important. Establishing linkages between programs and between school and work appears to be one of the most important reform concerns.

All significant reform efforts uncovered in the study are supported by financial commitments on the part of governments. Funding, especially in the form of supporting local initiatives, appears to be most effective. Many of the systems studied carry out fundamental research into long-standing questions such as the disparity in achievement between the sexes and between different socio-economic groups.

The crucial role of the teacher in change and in the maintenance of quality education is recognized. The majority of systems are initiating some form of proficiency testing for certification, both initially and for renewal. Inservice opportunities for teachers, evaluation of teacher education programs, and entry requirements into teaching are a necessary corollary to certification review. Teachers' work conditions as well as their professional stature and responsibility in planning and implementing reform are important to the quality of education.

Lawson believes that long-range planning and innovations should be a combined effort of professionals in the government, the universities and the schools, along with the local community, and that the process of improvement should be continuous.

THE FUTURE AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

L.J. D'Amore and Associates Ltd. of Montreal were commissioned to prepare a report on *Images of the Future*. This report contains a consolidation of futuristic perspectives from a variety of sources. General images of the future, with specific implications for Canada, and in particular for Alberta, are elaborated. Emerging technologies in various areas are considered relative to the impact on the family, the office, the factory, the school and other societal institutions. The findings and conclusions of this futures study were then reviewed and validated by a group of specialists in appropriate fields such as economics, sociology, social psychology and demography.

Nine educators, representing a cross-section of educators in Alberta and a well known Canadian educator from McGill University, were selected to discern important issues and concerns that could be derived from *Images of the Future* and to enunciate the implications that these might have in developing a framework for secondary education in Alberta. This team examined *Images of the Future* and prepared individual papers for the secondary review.

Following subsequent discussions, views were synthesized in a report entitled *Pioneering the Future: Educational Implications and Policy Directions for Alberta Secondary Schools* authored by Dr. Richard Butt of the University of Lethbridge. Dr. Butt's report is summarized in this section.

Butt indicated that we need a vision of what we believe to be desirable and reasonable for the human family. Only then can we use human intelligence, will and creativity to cause that future to happen. An image of the future needs to be developed systematically through common participation. A positive and eclectic image of the future will need to be developed by local school communities to meet their own needs and interests within the context of a pluralistic and multicultural society. This will be an ongoing and continuous developmental process as needs and resources change. The spiritual and aesthetic aspects of existence are regarded as being essential to envisioning the future as well as to the belief and commitment needed to attain a preferred future.

Therefore, a desirable future would allow the utilization of knowledge and information, science and technology to improve the human condition. Harmony with the environment rather than its

destruction would result from lower levels of consumption, use of natural foods and of durable, repairable, adaptable, non-polluting and energy efficient products.

Alberta's economic picture would change from massive resource extraction to dynamic and flexible enterprises providing technological expertise, products and information to other nations. The emphasis for the individual would be lifelong education and work to develop literacy, autonomy and self-reliance. Human beings would be able to participate in determining their own future. Greater self-reliance would counteract the alienation being experienced today. While individual efficacy and autonomy would be affirmed, at the same time individuals would become more aware of being part of a group with inherent responsibilities.

Communities would integrate leisure, education and work in a person-oriented fashion through participatory decision-making and team approaches to organization. Stereotyping whether by race, national group or gender would decline as everyone worked together to create a better community. As individual communities became more self-reliant and self-sufficient, they would act in concert with others on common concerns. There would be a movement toward a balanced global economy and distribution of wealth, the goal of which would be social justice for all. Instead of strict division of labor, hierarchical lines of authority and bureaucratic control, there would be a tendency towards teamwork, participatory decision-making and more horizontal forms of organization.

To attain the preferred future, it will be necessary to examine the values which guide human actions. New human, social and environmental problems which have resulted from science and technology will require new ethical procedures and values for resolution. The values that have been emphasized by our current way of living exploit the environment for economic gain with little regard for human consequences. Resources for a directional shift in values could come from our own multicultural and pluralistic society. In addition, the study of the humanities could bring us to an understanding of values more conducive to the betterment of the human condition.

Flexibility and adaptability will be required to realize a preferred future. Although uncertainty can be minimized by planning and managing change, some uncertainty and ambiguity cannot be totally eliminated. Therefore, individuals will need to learn to tolerate uncertainty as they pursue quality of life rather than quantity.

Implications for the Future of Secondary Education

Secondary education must be relevant to the lives of students. It must maximize the development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will permit youth to be major agents in creating their

own future lives and in participating with others in the attainment of a preferred future.

Otherwise, the natural developmental search for meaning to life experienced during adolescence, and the perceived lack of relevance of education to their personal needs, will augment the alienation, lack of authenticity and control which individuals feel in respect to their own lives today. A future in which our young people cannot participate with a sense of ownership and personal meaning will serve only to augment the present rates of mental disorder and suicide. The prospect of increased complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity in an expanding technological world with new social and personal issues underscores the necessity to focus on individual autonomy. Therefore, individuality must be recognized and strengthened while, at the same time, individuals become more aware of being part of a collectivity with inherent responsibilities.

The ideals and human needs of the preferred image of the future must be examined to identify the key concepts, skills and values which will act as guides in improving secondary education. The suggestions which came from the team of educators included an understanding of global interrelationships and the influence and control on society of political and economic structures. In addition, personal development, an understanding of the application of technology, and an appreciation of the role of science were emphasized. (See Appendix B.)

Futures literature is potential content for secondary education. It should be relevant, consisting of knowledge that will be of most worth to the student. A primary focus for adolescents would be an integrated approach to physical, emotional and psychological health: physical activity, nutrition, knowledge of human development and sexuality, knowledge of one's own needs, interests, aspirations, and interpersonal skills. Life, leisure and job skills including opportunities to create employment through cooperative entrepreneurship, public service and avocational pursuits would be a part of secondary education.

To the traditional basics of communication and computational skills would be added the skills of computer and electronic media for disseminating, communicating and gaining access to knowledge and information, setting up networks and lifelong access to learning. Another curricular element would focus on various cultural groups to foster understanding and appreciation of diverse ways of living, including the learning of other languages. In addition to the study of the social and economic dimensions of society, topics of global interdependence and environmental stewardship, the effects of science and technology on society as well as ethical issues involved would be suitable. The curriculum should provide, therefore, a balanced and integrated study of the humanities, social sciences and science and technology. Underlying all of these and integrated with the curriculum would be the moral, ethical and spiritual values which guide and

inform human lives and enable students to develop a personal philosophy of life.

Formulation of policy for secondary education must take into account the general and personal needs of the adolescent learner. The nature of the adolescent requires that learning provide significant opportunities for involvement in concrete experiences. In order to build a sense of identity and a personal value system, students should be given the opportunity to make the decisions and choices of which they are capable and for which they are ready. If learners are to become participatory, then students must have the opportunity to integrate within their learning experiences thought and action, theory and practice. They must be encouraged to take as much responsibility as possible for learning, including its nature and design.

The development of a sense of self-worth is enhanced by service to others. This suggests that opportunities for such service within the community should constitute a significant part of secondary education.

The secondary school curriculum would need revision to accommodate these elements. Content might be discarded or reorganized to integrate knowledge into a more compact structure. These curricular changes would require a gradual approach and therefore, short, medium and long-term stages of evolution may be necessary.

The curriculum structure needs to remain flexible and adaptable. Simplification of curriculum could be achieved by introducing core and elective components within each course. Some areas, previously a part of the school curriculum, could be provided by other community agencies.

Multiple routes would be available for the initiation of the young into our society. There should be sufficient flexibility in secondary education to take account of students' needs, especially following junior high school, to work or pursue other activities prior to resuming studies. Alternative learning places and experiences would be considered equally valid and appropriate. This would be in accord with the acceptance of a lifelong learning concept and the need for adults to return to school for specific learning purposes. In addition, it would allow varying program content and structures for the junior and senior high divisions with consideration for special program structures for young adults in Grade 12, because of the differences of their needs compared to early and middle adolescents.

Creative and flexible programming would be utilized to meet the needs of special groups of students, the handicapped, the gifted, linguistic groups, and students in isolated regions. Some of the means available would be optional courses with modular structures, community experiences, alternative routes to fulfill graduation requirements, computer-assisted instruction, and distance education. Because of the availability of diverse technologies such as computers, two-way video, teleconferencing, distance education could be used for

remote or rural schools lacking facilities or for sharing of teaching and other resources.

There is a need for facilitating a two-way interaction between the school and community for mutual benefit. The school can provide only a part of secondary education, as diverse influences in the lives of the young are more persuasive than ever. Nor can the secondary school remain in isolation from social and technological changes which are thrust upon individuals and communities. Schools could render a valuable service by assisting students to assess critically innovations relative to improving the human condition. Therefore, unique and specialized institutions would continue to exist but they would be complementary to, rather than an alternative for, education in the community or the workplace.

What is clear is that we need an integrated and community-based approach to education, where responsibilities are shared by various governmental and community structures along with parents and students. Recent research has indicated that community-based approaches to change are likely to be more successful.

A policy strategy that emerged from the *Educational Implications of the Future* study is the need to integrate secondary education with the rest of society. After six years of school, secondary education school-age children need something more to look forward to than another six years of school. This is particularly so today when they increasingly realize that meaningful employment does not necessarily lie at the end of school nor even at the end of several more years of higher education. Adolescents are old enough to make a meaningful contribution to society and it is to their benefit to be allowed to do so. Our educational system should provide them with this opportunity. If we understand and believe that education is a lifelong process, then we do not need to crowd an undue proportion of learning into the teenage years.

Education must necessarily play a significant role in assisting our young people to participate in creating and reaching the preferred future. The suggestions and findings of this project are meant to be treated as the beginning of a process of continuous policy discussion and elaboration, involving all segments of society concerned with the purpose and achievements of secondary education.

Secondary schools should be invited to participate in elaborating policy through various developmental projects which they would plan within an accepted future framework, to meet their needs. Schools and communities selected to participate would form a network to exchange information and to consider common issues and problems in their approach to future education. A coherent statement of purpose, responsibility and function is needed to undergird and unite all the separate elements of secondary education into a guiding force for action.

Significant changes in secondary education are needed to provide a flexible framework for open and evolving policies in accordance with

the desired future suggested in this report. Because people and institutions need time to develop and grow, change can be accomplished gradually, taking into account local community, school and classroom realities. The focus of any policy development should be to develop strategies that enable and encourage all groups to participate in and to support proposed improvements and changes.

CONCLUSION

The ultimate aim of education is to develop the abilities of individuals in order that they might fulfill their personal aspirations while making a positive contribution to society. (Junior-Senior High School Handbook, 1984-85, p. vi.)

Efforts to ascertain ways to fulfill this ultimate aim of education for Albertans were evident from the papers which were included in this summary.

Dr. Nancy Sheehan's paper revealed that throughout the history of Alberta, there have been frequent efforts to make secondary education more responsive to the needs of society and of students. However, in spite of enormous changes, from catering to the academic elite to preparing a broad spectrum of students for education, work and life in a complex society, the academic role of the school has remained central and resistant to change.

Dr. John Mitchell's study indicated that adolescents of today possess a greater range of information but it is doubtful that their general thinking ability and their powers of intellect are more advanced than in the teenagers of earlier decades. He delineated the characteristics and needs of adolescents, maintaining that adolescent needs are those which integrate the diverse elements of our human nature in such a way that a person can be counted on to contribute to the requirements of society while maintaining purpose and direction within self. Only when human beings contribute to the satisfaction of the needs of others can they satisfy their own needs.

The comparative study of secondary education in various countries and American states by Dr. Robert F. Lawson revealed an increase in diversity of programming, as well as school-community cooperation in an effort to respond to the needs of their societies. Reforms in these areas tend to affirm the intellectual purpose of secondary education while they attempt to reach and retain more youth. Lawson recommended that the process of reform must be continual.

The need for ongoing change, flexibility and participatory decision-making on the part of educators, school and all sections of the community were affirmed in the work of Dr. Richard Butt and his *Educational Implications of the Future* project team. Dr. Butt's report addressed the conditions necessary for successful policy formulation for secondary education and attempted to map out the terrain that might be engaged by the policy development process. It produced an

example of a desirable future, as well as the values and skills needed for living in that future (Appendix B).

The suggestions for the future of secondary education contained in the studies commissioned for the Secondary Education Review can be summarized as follows:

1. Flexible and gradual approach to change involving participatory decision-making by all groups.
2. Consideration of adolescent characteristics and the needs of today's secondary students as they prepare for the world of the future.
3. School-community cooperation and integration.
4. Multiple routes of initiation into society.
5. Continual and dynamic review and reform.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE SECONDARY EDUCATION REVIEW

A. STUDIES COMMISSIONED FOR THE SECONDARY EDUCATION REVIEW

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A VISION FOR A DESIRABLE FUTURE

Major Characteristics of A Desirable Future

Application of scientific and technological innovations to enhance life.

Planned growth in information and communications networks.

Greater participation of the individual in the community.

Awareness of the inter-relatedness of global problems and local action.

Greater respect for and appreciation of our cultural diversity.

Increasing awareness of the importance of spiritual/moral dimension of life.

Lifestyles that integrate work, leisure and continuing education.

Examples of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Necessary For Living in a Desirable Future

Appreciation and respect for the preservation of the environment and the ethical use of scientific and technological advances.

Higher cognitive skills, such as critical thinking and interpretive skills, information acquisition and retrieval skills; communication skills through mastery of language; the ability to "learn how to learn" and to cooperate with others.

The ability to cooperate and share, develop a sense of service, become more involved in the community and engage in participatory decision-making with greater emphasis on the future.

Recognition of the need for service, cooperation, sharing and stewardship; awareness of global issues and the contribution of local activity to the resolution of global problems.

Awareness of diversity, tolerance and understanding of all members of a multicultural/pluralistic society.

The ability to analyze critically current societal values and to develop a personal value system consistent with a pluralistic society.

The ability to sense problems, conduct research, be innovative, and to participate in shaping the future and meeting the challenges it will present.

**Major Characteristics of
A Desirable Future**

**Examples of Knowledge, Skills and
Attitudes Necessary For Living in a
Desirable Future**

Greater awareness of
current social and
economic conditions.

Appreciation of the need for revised
organizational structures and procedures
based upon democratic principles,
including significant individual and local
participatory decision-making.

Tolerance for change and
uncertainty in daily living.

Ability to plan for the future, to cope
with ambiguity and uncertainty and to
develop personal values to guide
decision-making.

Pursuit of quality and
excellence in daily living.

The maximization of unique talents,
initiative, and creativity in the pursuit of
excellence to enhance personal and
societal goals.

REVIEW
OF
SECONDARY
PROGRAMS

**Alberta's Secondary
Education Program:
The Public's View**

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| REVIEW |
| OF |
| SECONDARY |
| PROGRAMS |

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McEwen, Nelly, *The Response of Albertans to the Secondary Program Review Questionnaire*. Second Language Services, June, 1984.

Tolman, L.R., *Opinions of Secondary School Students Regarding Objectives of Secondary Education in Alberta*. June, 1984.

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PART

I

INTRODUCTION

On February 9, 1984, the Honourable David King, Minister of Education, announced a major review of the province's secondary education programs. The review was perceived to be necessary for the following reasons:

- as the world becomes more complex and more competitive, quality education is becoming increasingly important;
- there is a need to provide firm direction to the education system; and
- education systems have come under criticism provincially and nationally.

The review is intended to:

- develop a better understanding of the secondary educational system in Alberta; and
- provide for a framework upon which to improve the current secondary educational system.

An important aspect of the Secondary Education Review focuses upon public participation. In 1984, Albertans were invited to present views and express concerns on secondary education issues through the following:

THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

This publication consisted of a mailout, to 856,000 households, of a combined information brochure and opinion survey on the province's secondary school system. Of the nearly 10,000 responses received by Alberta Education, many contained comments in an "open response" section which allowed the public the chance to address concerns not covered by the formal questions. Demographic questions included in the package revealed that a disproportionately high percentage of the adult population responding to the questionnaire were teachers and parents. This result was not unexpected because, although replies were solicited on a voluntary basis, the length of the questionnaire could have discouraged all but those with a special interest in education.

THE OPINIONNAIRE:

This survey of almost 3,000 Grade 10 and 12 students from selected schools across Alberta asked them to rate some 82 educational objectives in terms of importance. Since most of the items were those

that appeared in a similar poll eleven years ago, they provided a useful measure of changing attitudes among the province's youth.

THE GALLUP POLL:

A Gallup poll of approximately 1,000 adult Albertans included several topics related to the secondary school system. Responses to the poll were sometimes at variance with those of the questionnaire, but the questions asked of the two groups were not always comparable.

THE BRIEFS:

Finally, nearly 200 briefs were sent to Alberta Education, some from individuals, others from government departments, but the majority were from groups with a special interest in education, such as school boards, teachers, and parent groups. Those briefs, considered to represent groups, organizations and government agencies, are listed in Appendix A.

This booklet summarizes the public's views on secondary education under four basic issues: the purposes of secondary education; the content of the curriculum; how students learn best; and the distribution of rights, roles and responsibilities among parents, teachers, Alberta Education, and society at large.

PURPOSES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

In 1978, the provincial government responded to public concern about the direction of the school system by approving sixteen goals. Six of these provincial goals were deemed schooling goals: the school system itself should assume the prime responsibility for them. The other ten were classified as educational goals: schools should share the responsibility for achieving these with society at large — parents, churches, industry and business, labour, the media and other community agencies.

Many of the questions asked of the public in the process of the 1984 review of secondary education focused on these 1978 provincial goals: were they the right ones or were there other and more important ones, and had the responsibility been appropriately shared between the school and the community?

Asked to rate all sixteen provincial goals on a five-level scale (from "very unimportant" through "unimportant", "somewhat important", and "important" to "very important"), those surveyed by the 1984 questionnaire felt the most important goal to be the development of communication skills. And in answer to a follow-up question, most respondents (90 per cent) rated this a major *school* responsibility.

The second most important goal according to the 1984 questionnaire was the development of positive self-concepts. Of those respondents, 70 per cent thought that this goal was one to be shared by schools and society.

After communications skills, the most important schooling objective for respondents to the 1984 questionnaire was the acquisition of skills and knowledge in mathematics, the practical and fine arts, sciences, and social studies. Then came the development of learning skills such as organization and analysis.

Not only were all three of these goals considered very important by the majority of respondents, they were also seen as major school responsibilities.

Also important, but not a primary focus for schools according to the responses of Albertans in 1984, were such provincial goals as: developing work skills; civic values, including respect for law and order, public and private property and the rights of others; personal well-being; an interest in cultural, recreational or leisure pursuits; and life skills related to personal financial management or community

involvement. All were considered to be the shared responsibility of schools and society.

Contrary to the government's perceptions in 1978 when the goals were approved, only three of its six schooling goals were seen by questionnaire respondents in 1984 as primarily school responsibilities. The other three goals on which there was disagreement were the following: the enhancement of the student's mental, social and physical well-being; the preparation of students with the skills, habits and attitudes they would need in the world of work; and the development of an understanding of the responsibilities of active citizenship. Though rated as important in 1984, these three goals were viewed as a shared responsibility of society and the school.

A less marked disagreement with the 1978 division of duties was noted relative to another goal: the development of intellectual curiosity and a desire for lifelong learning. In 1978 the government considered it to be a shared responsibility of schools *and* society, however, in the 1984 questionnaire, almost half the respondents thought it should be a major school responsibility.

By and large, the picture emerging from the 1984 questionnaire is that of a general education. Schools should emphasize the acquisition of critical thinking and communication skills, and mastery of conventional subject content. In cooperation with the family and other community agencies, schools should also assist each student to develop a positive self-concept through a realistic appraisal of personal capabilities and limitations and a sense of community responsibility.

The Gallup poll also questioned Albertans about educational goals, but only offered a list of five for rating. Gallup respondents placed first the goal of preparing students for the world of work, ahead of such choices as those related to appreciating the value of tradition and individual rights. Job preparation also came first for the students surveyed in the opinionnaire, but communication skills were close behind. It is worth noting that the 1984 questionnaire respondents rated preparation for the world of work ninth of the sixteen goals.

Remembering that the questionnaire's response came from a disproportionately large number of parents and teachers, and that the Gallup poll contained a more representative cross-section of the adult population, the results of the three surveys can be summarized as they relate to goals of education, as follows: there was consensus that schools should concentrate primarily on the conventional subjects while promoting personal growth and civic values in cooperation with society. But, while the general public and students preferred that the schools prepare them for the world of work, parents and teachers wanted a broader general curriculum.

In their briefs, their letters, and their responses to a section provided in the questionnaire for personal comments, Albertans contributed their own ideas on educational goals. Among the goals most frequently mentioned by those answering the questionnaire were the development of a sense of self-worth and self-respect, the

acquisition of moral values and religious knowledge, the development of respect for others, and the fostering of participatory citizenship.

From the briefs and letters came goals such as the following: to promote independent thinking among students, and to develop graduates with a social conscience and with aesthetic sensitivity. Other briefs called for education about disarmament and the peaceful resolution of conflict. The response to some questionnaire questions reinforced this interest in developing a world view: 77 per cent of the respondents felt, for example, that students need to know more about the traditions of other cultures and countries.

Other briefs presented concerns about rapid social change. Their authors felt that schools should prepare students to deal with change by encouraging the view that education is a lifelong process. Again, the questionnaire rating reinforced this concern.

ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED OF SECONDARY STUDENTS

It was clear from the responses to the Secondary Education Review that Albertans expected the school system to place a high priority on the acquisition of knowledge and skills peculiar to each subject. But they also indicated that certain learning outcomes were important and should be integrated across all subject areas: critical thinking skills, analysis, problem-solving skills, and the ability to distinguish among fact, fiction and propaganda.

However, Albertans also expressed concerns about ethics and values. Gallup poll respondents placed great importance on acquiring a standard of values and knowledge of the difference between right and wrong. Respect for the rights of others, a sense of fair play, and knowledge of the moral, value and religious systems of other cultures, emerged from the briefs and open response section of the questionnaire as desirable outcomes of the secondary school system.

Some briefs also stressed the importance of developing a positive self-concept. For example, students should be self-accepting, self-disciplined, self-confident, and realistic in appraising personal abilities and limitations. As well, they should be compassionate, and open to lifelong learning and change.

Traditional concepts of citizenship were also advanced as desirable objectives, along with a broader concept of an interdependent world. Some Albertans wanted the curriculum to include explanations of Canadian democratic government and individual citizen's rights and responsibilities; others felt that experiences in public speaking, debating and decision-making would provide valuable preparation for civic involvement. Still other Albertans wanted students to become aware of social issues facing Canada and the world.

Among the wide range of knowledge, skills and attitudes which some Albertans felt should be fostered in the secondary schools were the following:

- willingness to take personal responsibility for preserving the environment through the wise use of natural resources;
- awareness of Canada's geography and ecology;
- positive attitude towards fitness, health and safety;
- understanding of technology and its impact on social change;
- participation in and exposure to the fine arts;

-
- good work habits;
 - understanding of today's world including an historical perspective;
 - understanding of the uses and limitations of science with emphasis on practical and experimental skills and knowledge;
 - development of general mathematical skills, especially the practical application of mathematics;
 - appreciation of the role of the family.

Albertans were asked which subjects should be part of the core (mandatory) curriculum, which should be options (electives), and which do not belong in the publicly funded schools at all.

Language arts was most often cited in the Gallup poll and the questionnaire as the subject which should be mandatory for both junior and senior high school programs, with mathematical skills close behind, followed by social studies, personal fitness, and preventative alcohol and drug abuse education. In the junior high program, respondents also included as mandatory general science, sex and family life education, and nutrition. Career planning was the only other subject considered compulsory in the senior program. No consensus emerged in support of any other subjects being mandatory though strong minority views were voiced. Although there was no agreement on any one particular science, many briefs indicated that science should be mandatory in both secondary school programs.

Language Arts

In each broad subject area, some specialties were rated higher than others. Within language arts, for example, reading and writing were considered most important, with grammar and spelling next, followed by listening and speaking. All these, in the majority view, should be mandatory. But there was little public support for compulsory instruction in other aspects of language arts; namely, literature and drama appreciation, and viewing. However, there was more support for viewing as a mandatory component in junior high school than in senior, and more support from questionnaire respondents than from those answering the Gallup poll.

In the student opinionnaire, Alberta students placed the study of literature for enjoyment in the bottom five objectives of the 82 listed in 1984. However, they rated effective writing third most important.

The basic message was that language arts was considered to more important because of its practical applications rather than its aesthetic values.

Mathematics

Similarly, when mathematics was broken down into its components, problem-solving and computation both rated much more

highly as mandatory subjects in secondary programs than did theoretical mathematics. For example, 97 per cent of questionnaire respondents regarded problem-solving skills as a mandatory component of the junior high program, but only 53 per cent of the same group saw theoretical mathematics as mandatory.

Social Studies/Social Sciences

Within social studies, the public clearly indicated that Canadian history was to be included: 92 per cent of questionnaire respondents felt it should be mandatory in the junior high program; and 80 per cent in the senior high program. The Gallup response was less supportive, but the majority still favoured making Canadian history mandatory. In addition, consensus emerged from the two surveys that other elements of social studies, such as world history, geography, current events, and comparative governments, should be compulsory in both junior and senior high programs. However, slightly more than half those surveyed felt that the study of contemporary social problems should not be mandatory in either level of the secondary school program.

The study of economics occasioned an interesting division: just over half the questionnaire respondents felt that this subject should not be mandatory in the junior high program, while 58 per cent of the Gallup pollees felt that it should be. Both groups felt it should be mandatory in the senior high program.

In some briefs, a case was made for more emphasis on Canadian and world history, while other briefs suggested that the current social studies program placed too much stress on values clarification or on government, economics and social problems, particularly at the junior high level.

Science

Albertans were ambivalent about including science as a compulsory subject. As far as general science was concerned, both adult surveys indicated it should be mandatory in the junior high program (73 per cent of questionnaire respondents and 66 per cent of the Gallup poll). But in regard to such specializations as chemistry, physics and biology, Albertans were fairly evenly divided over whether they ought to be mandatory or optional. As for senior high, there was also divided opinion on the mandatory or optional status of these specializations as well as general science. Other scientific subjects, such as agriculture and ecology, were regarded as optional courses at both levels.

In several briefs, Albertan expressed concern that the practical applications of science be included and that the content be kept current. Although there was no agreement on any one particular science, many briefs indicated that science should be mandatory in both secondary school programs.

Health Education and Personal Development

The public also agreed that some components of the health program should be mandatory. Personal fitness received strong support from adult Albertans as a compulsory aspect for both secondary school programs. There was also consensus for compulsory preventative drug and alcohol abuse education in both junior and senior high.

Sex and family life education also drew the support of a narrow majority for inclusion in the junior high, but not in the senior high mandatory program. However, 11 per cent of questionnaire respondents did not want it taught at either level. On the other hand, approximately 77 per cent of the students surveyed by the opinionnaire thought that offering a sex education course was "important" to "extremely important".

The teaching of nutrition, according to the surveys, ought to be mandatory in the junior high and optional in the senior high programs, while the acquisition of recreational or leisure skills should, in the opinion of most adults, be optional throughout the secondary school.

Some of the briefs reinforced the importance of alcohol and drug abuse education, and 80 per cent of the students surveyed in 1984 rated a drug and alcohol abuse course as "important" to "extremely important".

Languages Other Than English

The consensus regarding languages other than English was that these belonged in the secondary school curriculum, but as options. The issue was important enough for a third of those responding to the open response section of the questionnaire to raise it on their own initiative. They suggested that as additional languages, Alberta schools ought to teach, among others, Spanish, Latin, Russian, Chinese, Cree and other Native tongues.

French drew substantial support in both adult surveys as a mandatory subject. Most respondents, however, felt it belonged as an option in both junior and senior high school. In the Gallup poll, approximately 8 per cent felt that French should not be offered at all. And while some briefs opposed French immersion schools in times of economic restraint, others called for French to become a compulsory subject in all elementary and secondary schools.

German and Ukrainian were overwhelmingly endorsed as options. However, a significant number of those surveyed in the Gallup poll felt that Ukrainian (20 to 22 per cent) and German (15 to 19 per cent) were unnecessary subjects in publicly funded schools.

Fine Arts

The fine arts received strong support in the briefs from those who felt either that students ought to be able to specialize in these areas in senior high school, or that all students could benefit from these subjects. These briefs suggested that fine arts should be mandatory, but this notion found little support on the surveys.

The evidence of the surveys was that Albertans viewed the fine arts as worthwhile but not crucial; that is, as optional, not mandatory. As many as 16 per cent of the questionnaire's respondents and 10 per cent of Gallup pollees felt that performing skills should not be part of the fine arts program in publicly funded secondary schools.

Industrial Education, Business Education and Home Economics

In this booklet, "vocational training" refers to specialized job training, while "practical life skills" are those skills needed by most people in their daily lives. In both surveys, Albertans were asked to determine whether either type of skills training within industrial education, business education or home economics should be mandatory or optional.

The questionnaire respondents were less inclined to see vocational training as a mandatory component, and more inclined than Gallup poll respondents to view it as having no place in the schools at all. For example, the questionnaire revealed only 13 per cent in favour of including the vocational training aspect of industrial education in the junior high core, while 34 per cent of Gallup respondents indicated that it should be mandatory. Although 19 per cent of questionnaire respondents wanted the vocational training aspect of industrial education left out of junior high entirely, only 5 per cent of the Gallup respondents felt the same way.

There was considerably more support in both surveys for teaching the practical life skills aspect of industrial education, business education, or home economics, when intended for use in everyday life rather than as training for specific jobs. Gallup poll respondents were more inclined to see practical life skills training as a mandatory component than were the questionnaire respondents. For example, while the Gallup poll indicated 55 per cent in favour of mandatory practical life skills training in industrial education in senior high schools, only 34 per cent of questionnaire respondents agreed.

Some briefs expressed the view that schools ought to provide all students with practical life skills through compulsory subjects in basic business practice, money management, and interpersonal and family relations.

Regarding job training skills, however, the clear message of the

surveys was that these belonged in the school curriculum only as options.

Work Experience and Career Planning

Work experience also revealed a division between the views of the questionnaire respondents and those of the Gallup poll. The former felt it should be optional at both levels, with a sizable minority (30 per cent) having stated that it should not be in the junior high curriculum at all. Gallup poll respondents, on the other hand, wanted it as a mandatory subject in senior high (55 per cent for mandatory, 41 per cent for optional), and narrowly preferred it as an option in the junior high curriculum. Students surveyed by the opinionnaire also wanted work experience. They rated it ninth out of 82 objectives in the 1984 survey (though it is worth noting that, in 1973, they rated it third).

Career planning, too, drew more support as a mandatory component on the Gallup results than on the questionnaire. Still, majorities of both groups wanted it to be mandatory in the senior high program. They tended to include it in the junior high optional program. The student opinionnaire also revealed strong support for career counselling.

In another question, 94 per cent of Gallup poll respondents thought that secondary schools should provide career development services and that these services should be offered by trained counsellors, not regular teachers.

Religious Studies

Religious studies was supported as an option by the majority of respondents, but this subject also attracted sizable minorities (a third on the questionnaire, a quarter on the Gallup poll) who did not want denominational studies taught in high school at all, not even as an option. Albertans were asked to consider three forms of religious studies: denominational, world religions, and moral and ethics instruction. Of these, moral and ethics instruction received more support as a mandatory component although most adults generally favoured all three forms as options. Students, on the other hand, rated several religious objectives among the least important on the list of 82 objectives presented in the 1984 opinionnaire.

Computer Literacy/Computer Science

Judging from the opinion suveys, there was no consensus for computer studies to be either a mandatory or optional subject. Those replying to the questionnaire preferred it in the junior high mandatory and the senior high optional programs, but by only narrow margins in

both cases. The Gallup response was to view computer studies as an option at both levels, again by only slight margins.

Some Alberta students, in responding to an open-ended question on the opinionnaire, called for more emphasis on computers, and several of the briefs were in agreement.

Summary

In summary, Albertans felt that the mandatory programs for both levels of secondary school ought to comprise the practical language arts, mathematics, social studies, personal fitness and preventative alcohol and drug abuse education. In the junior, but not the senior mandatory program, family life and sex education, general science, and nutrition were included. Albertans also agreed that career planning should be mandatory in the senior high program. Many briefs would add science to the mandatory program in senior high, although they did not specify which science.

Albertans were ambivalent about whether physics, chemistry, biology and computer studies belonged in the secondary school as mandatory or as optional courses. As well, there was no consensus on work experience programs.

In the optional program for both junior and senior levels, however, Albertans clearly favoured languages other than English, agriculture, ecology, the fine arts, religious studies, and a range of vocational and practical life skills training in areas such as industrial arts, business education and home economics.

PART
IV

HOW STUDENTS LEARN BEST

Albertans were asked if the present system of education in secondary schools facilitated learning. The public responded to concerns on the division of secondary education into junior and senior high schools, graduation requirements, evaluation procedures, methods of advancement, attendance regulations, and support services. While Albertans generally supported the present procedures for implementing educational services, there was considerable interest in a system which offered more alternatives, especially when these were designed to meet the needs of exceptional students.

Junior high schools proved to be a topic of importance to many individuals and organizations, largely because they felt students in these grades have special characteristics. While it is true that a few briefs called for the elimination of junior high (placing Grades 7 and 8 in elementary schools and Grade 9 in the senior high school), the questionnaire showed a majority in favour of retaining the current division.

Several briefs suggested reasons for the high interest in retaining junior high schools. The young adolescent in junior high is emotional, vulnerable, easily bored, and has a strong need for group acceptance, recognition and self-esteem. Students in junior high demonstrate unique behavior because they develop physically, emotionally, and intellectually at widely varying rates. Volatile as individuals, in classroom groups these students were regarded as very sensitive to peer pressure and as presenting special teaching challenges.

Many briefs called for flexibility in teaching styles and for specialized junior high teachers, specially prepared in curriculum development, group dynamics, leadership techniques, constructive approaches to discipline, and communications skills.

Some Albertans felt that junior high school courses should place less emphasis on the learning of abstract concepts, stressing instead their practical applications. Experiential learning and hands-on approaches were also suggested. Others warned against too much specialization.

Albertans were concerned that the senior high school program was not preparing students to think for themselves. In some briefs, it was indicated that senior high studies were not sufficiently rigorous, while others suggested that programs were too difficult and too broad. Some Albertans thought that the programs of studies must be relevant to

future needs, and requested regular and thorough updating of curriculum content rather than simply additions to the present curriculum.

The questionnaire revealed widespread support for programs tailored to meet the needs of exceptional students. Three-quarters of the respondents approved programs for the gifted, and 84 per cent supported special opportunities for the learning disabled. Thus, there was support for a system flexible enough to give special consideration to the students at the intellectual extremes. However, approximately half of the students polled by the opinionnaire thought it was "useless" or "of little importance" to provide special classes in which students were grouped on the basis of intelligence.

A few briefs proposed ways of helping children with exceptional needs. For the learning disabled, it was recommended that teachers and counsellors receive specialized preparation, and that material resources be augmented. For gifted children, enrichment activities were suggested, including access to correspondence and university courses. Some briefs suggested that exceptional children be offered more appropriate programs, which would allow them to advance through the conventional curriculum at their individual rates. Generally, Albertans wanted programs to focus as much as possible on the individual student's personal and academic growth.

There was considerable desire for more flexible methods to allow students to advance through the secondary school program. Instead of having them grouped by age, advancing through grades at simultaneous yearly intervals, some Albertans felt each student should be allowed to advance at his or her own speed. However, 72 per cent of questionnaire respondents did not want to abolish the present system of grades and only 46 per cent agreed that students should be allowed to progress at their own speed. Most students (71 per cent of opinionnaire respondents), on the other hand, felt it was "important" to "extremely important" for schools to allow them to progress at their own speed. Several briefs suggested challenge examinations were a way of providing this. Others wanted mandatory subjects offered at two levels of difficulty.

On the issue of learning outside the classroom, no consensus was apparent. Fully 90 per cent of the senior high school students surveyed by the opinionnaire thought it "important" to "extremely important" for schools to offer them work experience related to one or more of their school subjects. Respondents to the questionnaire (59 per cent) and the Gallup poll (92 per cent) agreed that secondary students should be allowed to receive part of their schooling through practical experience in the workplace. On the question of allowing students to obtain part of their schooling through home study, 46 per cent of questionnaire respondents approved.

The Carnegie Unit is the current way of awarding senior high school credits based on the number of instructional hours spent on that subject and successful achievement. For example, a minimum of

25 hours of classroom instruction must be scheduled for each credit (time-on-task). Again, many briefs argued that time-on-task does not equal mastery and suggested challenge tests to permit students to move ahead and obtain the credits whether they spent more or less than the allotted time-on-task.

In addition, Albertans generally rejected suggestions of lengthening either the school day or year. Currently, secondary students spend between 1,500 to 1,600 minutes per week in school.

Concern that bright students might graduate before they were emotionally or socially mature if challenge tests were permitted prompted some Albertans to advocate compulsory attendance until the current school leaving age of 16. Other briefs preferred that school leaving be based solely on achievement. Three-quarters of the questionnaire's respondents also approved compulsory attendance until completion of program requirements.

In the briefs, the majority of Albertans indicated that the requirements for Grade 12 graduation, either for the general or the advanced diploma, were generally acceptable. However, 60 per cent of the questionnaire respondents thought they were too low.

The current graduation requirements are only a year old. Previously, diplomas were awarded on the basis of school-assigned marks and the accumulation of 100 credits. But diploma examinations were reintroduced last year, requiring those seeking a general diploma to pass the English 30 or 33 diploma examination prepared by Alberta Education. Those seeking an advanced diploma must pass externally prepared diploma examinations in English 30, Mathematics 30, Social Studies 30, and one of Physics 30, Chemistry 30, or Biology 30. The marks from these examinations count for 50 per cent of a student's final mark, the other 50 per cent comes from the school.

Judging from Gallup poll results, most Albertans felt such examinations provided better evaluation of student achievement. They also thought diploma examinations would result in students making a greater effort to succeed. Some Albertans suggested that examinations also be used to determine entrance into senior high school.

On the other hand, senior high school students (58 per cent of opinionnaire respondents) rated diploma examinations as either "useless" or "of little importance" as a standardized means of testing achievement. In their open-ended responses, some students suggested diploma examinations which carried less weight, say 30 per cent instead of 50 per cent, in their final marks would be preferable. Students also complained they had not been adequately prepared for their examinations.

Some briefs expressed opposition to diploma examinations because they put too much emphasis on academic achievement, to the detriment of other subjects and programs. Other opponents felt they were poor methods of evaluation. On the other hand, some briefs commended the uniformity of evaluation and the challenge these examinations provide.

Albertans also generally approved of the subjects that have been designed as part of the mandatory program, though many felt there should be more compulsory subjects. They wanted the ratio of mandatory to optional subjects increased to approximately 70:30.

In the same vein, modifications were suggested in several briefs to make optional courses more standardized. At present, provincial course outlines cover only some options, while others are created locally to match community needs and resources. Some Albertans thought local options should be eliminated or de-emphasized, particularly in junior high school. In sum, many Albertans appeared to regard the core academic subjects as the primary focus of schooling and the options as less important. On the other hand, there was strong feeling expressed in the briefs that only a good optional program could provide the flexibility needed to meet the needs of individual youths.

The majority of respondents to both surveys supported the concept of providing different diplomas for completion of different programs. Also in line with this perceived need for flexibility, 55 per cent of questionnaire respondents supported the idea of an additional "special education" or "occupational" diploma for those students not able to meet general diploma requirements. But many Albertans opposed the idea, feeling that the diploma should convey a certain standard of academic achievement. Another suggestion was to offer one diploma only, but to include on it a description of the program completed, and even the marks received in each subject.

Many Albertans voiced a need for adequate support services. Counselling services were seen as especially important, particularly in light of the prospect of various career changes throughout a student's lifetime and the general uncertainty of the future. Students themselves rated career counselling sixth out of 82 objectives, and adequate library services fourth, in 1984. Personal counselling was given less weight, but 79 per cent of the students responding to the opinionnaire still rated it from "important" to "extremely important".

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EDUCATION

Many segments of society have influence over secondary education: parents, Alberta Education, teachers, and business and industry, to name a few. Albertans, however, were ambivalent about the way the responsibilities have been and should be shared among these groups, and whether they should be centralized or decentralized. The public appeared to approve of the latter in principle, yet found many tasks for Alberta Education to perform.

Almost half (49 per cent) of adults surveyed by Gallup felt local parent/teacher associations should have more say in education. Another 20 per cent would give a stronger influence to Alberta Education, and 16 per cent to locally-elected school officials. The present balance was considered fine by 10 per cent and 5 per cent did not express an opinion. Yet approximately 90 per cent of the questionnaire respondents wanted Alberta Education to continue setting achievement standards for the mandatory subjects in secondary schools, and roughly 60 per cent wanted Alberta Education to set the standards for options as well.

Generally, Albertans felt that parents should be more involved in educating their children. But almost half the Gallup poll respondents had no contact with their local schools and only 30 per cent had five or more hours of contact per year.

Many Albertans felt parents and communities needed to have more influence with their local school systems, and suggested that this might be effected by advisory councils made up of parents and community leaders. Some briefs suggested that schools, especially those for special education students, would benefit from better liaisons with representatives of labour and business and industry.

The community school concept was heartily endorsed by some of those submitting briefs because they were perceived as fostering an integration of the school and society. Such schools, claimed their supporters, bring adults from the neighbourhood into the classroom not only to teach life skills and cultural heritage, but to learn through adult education programs. Partnerships between the school and community were seen as mutually beneficial to both the school and the community.

The central role of the teacher was recognized by many Albertans who, therefore, felt teaching standards to be central concern. On the opinionnaire, the students rated two objectives related to good

teaching among their top ten: that teachers should present their objectives clearly and that they should use a variety of teaching aids.

Some Albertans suggested that Alberta Education assume a leadership role in raising teaching standards. One suggested method was to give the university education faculties more feedback about the performance of their graduates and to encourage them to raise their admission standards. A second was to raise standards for certification and to require the periodic evaluation of teachers for recertification. Suggested criteria for such evaluation would be classroom performance and teacher efforts to upgrade their skills and knowledge. The need for teacher upgrading, in fact, was a recurrent theme in the briefs, especially in the areas of constructive approaches to discipline, understanding adolescence, individualizing education to suit exceptional students, and utilizing technology to enhance learning. It was noted frequently that the ultimate responsibility for upgrading and inservice rests with the teacher.

Lowering the student/teacher ratio and having teachers offer instruction within their specialties were advanced as means of improving teacher performance.

The primary role of the teacher which emerged from this review was that of a facilitator of learning, not a disseminator of knowledge.

Universities, in addition to preparing teachers, were also recognized as having strong influence on secondary education — too strong, some felt. A few Albertans thought that universities, by complaining about the quality of their freshmen's writing and mathematical skills, had pressured the secondary school system into undue emphasis on academic subjects at the expense of a general education. In this regard, one submission noted the small proportion, just one fifth, of high school graduates who proceed to higher education.

In the matter of funding, Albertans appeared to be fairly satisfied. The Gallup poll revealed, for example, that 44 per cent thought present spending levels (\$3,000 to \$4,000 a year per pupil) were appropriate; 20 per cent thought them too high; 11 per cent too low; and 25 per cent had no opinion. Answering a related question, 44 per cent thought the quality of secondary education justified the expense, while 35 per cent felt it did not, and 21 per cent did not know. While 29 per cent of the Gallup poll respondents called for increased provincial or municipal taxes in order to maintain current education levels, another 20 per cent thought the government should spend more, but that revenue should come from other government departments; 15 per cent thought staff cuts could provide more program funding, and fully 36 per cent called for holding the line on any tax increases. If more money were available, declared a few briefs, it should be spent in rural districts with low municipal tax bases.

While some Albertans offered suggestions on ways to reduce costs, particularly in the administrative area, others recommended that sufficient funding be made available at the beginning of any new initiative. Several briefs cited the social studies inservice as an example of how a new program should be introduced.

PART
VI

SUMMARY

Albertans want their school system to facilitate the intellectual, emotional, moral and physical growth of their children. They see most of these goals as shared responsibilities, with parents and other social institutions reserving to the school system the primary responsibility for intellectual development.

In relation to the schools' responsibility, Albertans feel that students should master a body of knowledge and skills in a fairly conventional range of subjects, but that they also should learn how to think critically. Thus, all students would graduate with a range of competencies by acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes in mandatory subjects, the most important being language arts, especially reading and writing. They would also have learned how to make informed decisions, and how to continue learning throughout their lives.

Many Albertans are concerned about preparing students for the world of work. To some, this means teaching skills related to specific jobs; to others it means teaching general work-related skills which will enable them to cope with and adapt to the uncertainty and constant changes of the future. Also, the probability that frequent career changes will occur in a student's lifetime must not be overlooked: it is of particular importance to prepare students for this eventuality.

Albertans want their children to develop a system of values that stresses respect for human rights and civic duties, and to become acquainted with the cultures and religions of the world.

The junior high schools, in particular, should be flexible, with staff well prepared for the individuality of their adolescent charges. Their curriculum should be practical and experiential.

The compulsory component of the secondary school program should be increased. Communication skills, especially reading and writing, are rated the most important for students to learn. Mathematical skills come second. Albertans also see social studies, especially Canadian history, and such components of the health curriculum as personal fitness and alcohol and drug abuse education, as crucial enough to be part of the secondary school mandatory program. In addition, general science, family life and sex education, and nutrition should be compulsory in junior high. Career planning also should be mandatory in the senior high program. Many briefs indicate that science should be mandatory in senior high school, but they do not agree on which science.

Options should continue to be offered in such areas as fine arts, languages other than English, religious studies, and vocational and life skills training, but Alberta Education should maintain tighter control over all options than it does presently.

The grade structure and the division between junior and senior high schools should be retained, as should compulsory attendance. But many Albertans think that achievement, not age, should determine when students may leave the system, and that gifted students especially should be allowed to advance at their own speed. So, too, should learning disabled students, without the stigma of failure.

Steps should be taken to enhance the quality of teaching: by raising entrance standards in faculties of education; by requiring in-service training; by raising certification standards; or by requiring periodic evaluation of teachers for recertification.

Although most Albertans affirm the role of the province in specifying the content and standards of achievement for instructional programs, the public also wants the local community to be more involved in decisions that affect secondary education.

In summary, Albertans are generally satisfied with the present secondary school system but would like to see graduates with better communication skills. As well, students should be given more moral training and instruction in various life skills, and be encouraged to develop a greater ability to think independently and critically. Albertans feel it is important that the secondary school assist students to develop their potential and by so doing to become lifelong learners, capable of meeting the challenges of the future.

BRIEFS FROM GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

1. Alberta Teachers' Association
2. Calgary Board of Education Senior High School Principals' Association
3. Christian Schools International, District 11, Curriculum Office
4. Home Economics Curriculum Coordinating Committee
5. Fine Arts Consultants' Council
6. County of Flagstaff (briefs received at three Public Hearings)
7. Calgary Board of Education, Continuing Education Services Department
8. Grande Prairie Women's Residence Association
9. Jack James Secondary School, Calgary Board of Education
10. Medicine Hat School District No. 76
11. Calgary Board of Education Social Studies Department Heads
12. County of Leduc No. 25 Board of Education
13. Lethbridge Collegiate Institute
14. Staff of Camrose Composite High School
15. Alberta Municipal Affairs
16. A Group of Nanton Area Citizens
17. Calgary Board of Education Secondary (Academic/Occupational) School Principals
18. English 20 Class, Ardrossan Junior-Senior High School
19. Calgary Board of Education Work Experience Teacher Advisory Committee
20. County of Mountain View No. 17 School Administrators
21. Camrose and County Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
22. Willow Creek School Division No. 28 Board of Trustees
23. Calgary Board of Education Work Experience Advisory Committee
24. Alberta Agriculture
25. Calgary Board of Education Business Education Advisory Committee
26. Alberta Environment, Communications Division
27. Alberta Tourism and Small Business

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28. Alberta Economic Development, Planning and Services
 29. Calgary Board of Education Home Economics Teachers
 30. Calgary Board of Education Junior High School Principals' Association
 31. Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education
 32. Alberta Labour
 33. Project Ploughshares Education Committee, Calgary
 34. Health and Physical Education Curriculum Coordinating Committee
 35. Alberta Education, Special Education Services
 36. Canadian Parents for French, Alberta Branch
 37. Edmonton Catholic Schools Ukrainian Bilingual Parent Advisory Society
 38. Creation Science Association of Alberta
 39. UNICEF Canada National Development Education Committee
 40. Interdepartmental Community School Committee
 41. Science Education Consultant Council on Secondary School Science Education in Alberta
 42. Alberta Public Health Association
 43. Education Curriculum and Instruction 472 Students, Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta
 44. Caritas High School Staff, Edmonton
 45. Alberta-Mackenzie Council, Catholic Women's League of Canada
 46. Calgary Hire-A-Student Committee
 47. Physicians for Social Responsibility, The Canadian Medical Coalition for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Alberta Chapter, Edmonton Branch
 48. Industrial Education Curriculum Coordinating Committee
 49. Edmonton Public Schools
 50. Rosebud School of the Arts
 51. The University of Calgary Senate
 52. Alberta Vocational Centre, Edmonton
 53. Alberta Utilities and Telecommunications
 54. Lethbridge Catholic Separate School District No. 9 School Board
 55. Medicine Hat High School Technical Staff
 56. Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta
 57. M.E. Lazerte Community School Advisory Committee
 58. Calgary Board of Education, Division of Instruction Leadership Group
 59. Ad Hoc Group of Librarians from Zone Four
 60. Alberta Federation of Women United for Families
 61. Business Education Curriculum Coordinating Committee
 62. Alberta Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation, Occupational Health and Safety Division
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63. County of Lac Ste. Anne No. 28 Board of Education
 64. Calgary Academy
 65. Lethbridge School District No. 51 Board of Trustees
 66. Lethbridge School District No. 51 Secondary School Principals
 67. Graduate Class, Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta
 68. Fort McMurray Public School District No. 2833
 69. Conference of Alberta School Superintendents
 70. Willow Creek Peace and Development Group
 71. Business Education Department, Salisbury Composite High School, County of Strathcona No. 20
 72. Association canadienne-francaise de l'Alberta
 73. Alberta Association for Bright Children, Strathcona County Chapter
 74. Grande Prairie Composite High School
 75. Curriculum Policies Committee
 76. Alberta Manpower
 77. Mathematics Curriculum Coordinating Committee
 78. 1984 Provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference: Resolutions on "Updating Agricultural Curriculum in Elementary and High Schools"
 79. Social Studies Curriculum Coordinating Committee
 80. Alberta Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
 81. Foothills School Division No. 38
 82. County of Parkland No. 31
 83. Legal Resource Centre, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta
 84. Alberta Social Services and Community Health
 85. Red Deer Public School District No. 104
 86. Northern Alberta Development Council
 87. St. John Ambulance — Alberta Council
 88. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, Leisure Education Committee
 89. Ad Hoc Group of Instructors and Consultants in the Practical Arts
 90. Alberta Recreation and Parks
 91. Calgary Area Educators: A Brief on English Language Arts
 92. City of Calgary, Personnel Services Department
 93. Home Economics Specialist Council, Alberta Teachers' Association
 94. Broxton Park School, A Student Committee, Spruce Grove
 95. Health and Physical Education Council, Alberta Teachers' Association
 96. Alberta Energy and Natural Resources
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97. County of Strathcona No. 20 Board of Education
 98. County of Mountain View No. 17 Education Council Committee
 99. University of Alberta Hospitals School of Nursing
 100. Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 1
 101. Library Association of Alberta, Government Relations Committee
 102. Edmonton Catholic Schools
 103. Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta
 104. County of Beaver No. 9 Superintendent's Advisory Committee
 105. Alberta Society for the Visually Impaired
 106. Ukrainian Bilingual Association
 107. Prairie Bible Institute
 108. Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
 109. Fairview School Division No. 50
 110. Church of God in Christ, Mennonite
 111. Learning Resources Council, Alberta Teachers' Association
 112. Alberta Cultural Heritage Council
 113. County of Camrose No. 22
 114. Calgary Public Local No. 38, Alberta Teachers' Association
 115. Western Industrial Research and Training Centre
 116. Boilermakers Union Local Lodge 146
 117. City of Edmonton, Fire Department

GOALS OF BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALBERTA

Goals of Schooling

Schooling, as part of education, accepts primary and distinctive responsibility for specific goals basic to the broader goals of education. Programs and activities shall be planned, taught and evaluated on the basis of these specific goals in order that students:

- Develop competencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
- Acquire basic knowledge and develop skills and attitudes in mathematics, the practical and fine arts, the sciences, and the social studies (including history and geography), with appropriate local, national, and international emphasis in each.
- Develop the learning skills of finding, organizing, analyzing, and applying information in a constructive and objective manner.
- Acquire knowledge and develop skills, attitudes and habits which contribute to physical, mental and social well-being.
- Develop an understanding of the meaning, responsibilities, and benefits of active citizenship at the local, national and international levels.
- Acquire knowledge and develop skills, attitudes, and habits required to respond to the opportunities and expectations of the world of work.

Because the above goals are highly interrelated, each complementing and reinforcing the other, priority ranking among them is not suggested. It is recognized that in sequencing learning activities for students some goals are emphasized earlier than others; however, in relation to the total years of schooling, they are of equal importance.

In working toward the attainment of its goals, the school will strive for excellence. However, the degree of individual achievement also depends on student ability and motivation as well as support from the home. Completion of diploma requirements is expected to provide the graduate with basic preparation for lifelong learning. Dependent on program choices, the diploma also enables job entry or further formal study.

Goals of Education

Achievement of the broader goals of education must be viewed as a shared responsibility of the community. Maximum learning occurs when the efforts and expectations of various agencies affecting children complement each other. Recognizing the learning that has or has not occurred through various community influences, among which the home is the most important, the school will strive to:

- Develop intellectual curiosity and a desire for lifelong learning.
- Develop the ability to get along with people of varying backgrounds, beliefs and lifestyles.
- Develop a sense of community responsibility which embraces respect for law and authority, public and private property, and the rights of others.
- Develop self-discipline, self-understanding and a positive self-concept through realistic appraisal of one's capabilities and limitations.
- Develop an appreciation for tradition and the ability to understand and respond to change as it occurs in personal life and society.
- Develop skills for effective utilization of financial resources and leisure time and for constructive involvement in community endeavours.
- Develop an appreciation for the role of the family in society.
- Develop an interest in cultural and recreational pursuits.
- Develop a commitment to the careful use of natural resources and to the preservation and improvement of the physical environment.
- Develop a sense of purpose in life and ethical or spiritual values which respect the worth of the individual, justice, fair play and fundamental rights, responsibilities and freedoms.

The ultimate aim of education is to develop the abilities of individuals in order that they might fulfil their personal aspirations while making a positive contribution to society.



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